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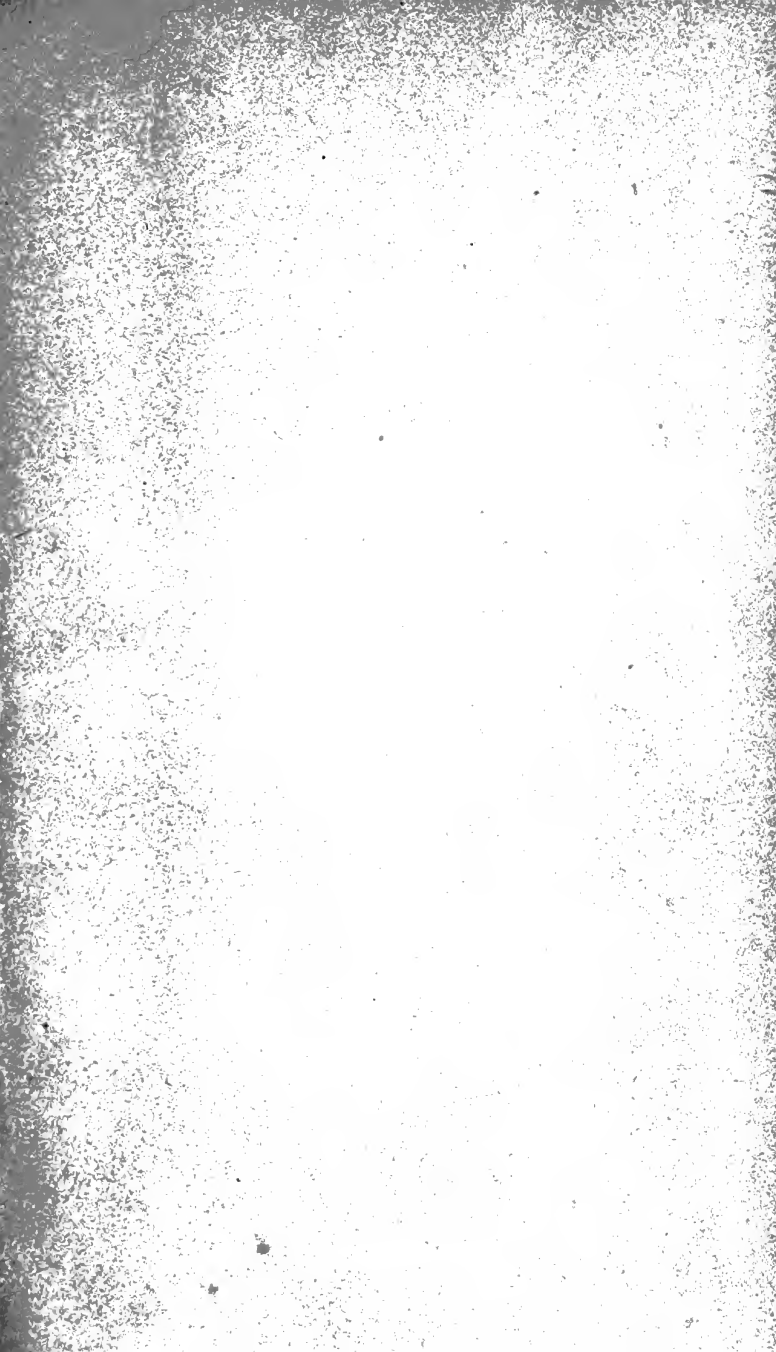
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JERUSALEM AS SEEN FROM OLIVET.

ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF  
SCRIPTURE;

SUGGESTED BY

*A Tour through the Holy Land.*

BY

HORATIO B. HACKETT,  
"PROFESSOR IN NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.



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## PREFACE.

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THE writer has been induced to prepare this volume in the hope that it may be useful to general readers of the Bible. The journey in Egypt and Palestine, out of which it has grown, was performed in the spring and summer of 1852, and the greater part of the contents were written out for the press more than a year ago, but unavoidable circumstances have delayed the publication until the present time. The work does not claim to be a book of travels, and would be misjudged if viewed in that light. The object has been, not to present a connected view of the geography of Palestine, or to detail at any length the personal incidents which travelers usually make so prominent in their journals; but, out of the mass of observations and facts which fell under my notice, to select those which seemed to be capable of being used with some advantage for the purpose of promoting a more earnest and intelligent study of the Sacred Volume. The object, in other words, has been to make this account of the journey to the reader

as nearly as possible what the journey itself was to the writer in the prosecution of it,—a means of illustrating the Scriptures, throwing light upon obscure passages, bringing vividly before the mind the scenes of sacred history, tracing out the proofs of the accuracy of the Bible in its allusions, customs, narratives, geographical notices, and, in general, putting us more exactly in the situation of the inspired writers, and thus enabling us the better to understand and appreciate their spirit and meaning.

The contents of the two last chapters are mainly topographical in their character, and, while they secure the incidental advantage of giving greater variety to the topics, harmonize entirely with the general purpose of the work. The places described in those portions of the book are connected with some of the most important events of Scripture, and the familiarity which the reader acquires with their situation and appearance must give to the narrative of such events a more impressive and life-like character. It will not be deemed a useless service that I have enumerated in the same connection, though with so much brevity, the objects of Scripture interest, which have been identified at Jerusalem and in the vicinity. Every one must wish to know the results of the investigations in regard to this class of objects; and it may be found convenient to have them stated within the compass of a few pages, instead of being obliged to search for

them through large volumes, where they are perplexed with questions and details which can interest only the antiquary.

It has been necessary, in order to keep before the mind the connections between Palestine and the Bible, to quote numerous passages of Scripture; the frequency of these citations forms one peculiar feature of the work. It has been my rule to compare the passages with the Hebrew and Greek, and, without seeking occasion to depart from the common version, I have not hesitated to change the language in some instances where the meaning of the original or perspicuity seemed to require it. Though intending for the most part to confine myself to points of which I could speak as an eye-witness, I have gone occasionally beyond that sphere, and have referred to the testimony of other travelers, when this was desirable, in order to confirm my own statements, or to render the information on a particular topic more complete.

The engravings, which have been inserted at the suggestion of the publisher, cannot be otherwise than acceptable to the reader. They are not original, but have been copied from works of an approved character. None have been selected except of objects or places which the writer has seen, so as to enable him to judge of the accuracy of the representation.

NEWTON CENTRE, August 23, 1855.





## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### EASTERN TRAVELING.

The child Jesus left at Jerusalem — The deceitful brook — Sliding of the feet — Pilgrim psalms — Modern pilgrimages — Pastures of the desert — Land of Goshen — Animals used in the desert — An eastern sky at night — Use of tents — Pitching of the tent — Frequent removals — Remarks of McCheyne — The tents of Kedar — Sand hills — Terrors of the wilderness — Skin bottles — Artifice of the Gibeonites — Valley of death-shade — Salt desert — Shadow of a rock, . . . . . 12—51

### CHAPTER II.

#### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

Snow for cooling drinks — Whited sepulchres — Carrying children — Divan — Place of honor — Streets, or bazaars — Eastern merchants — Rights of hospitality — Taking off the shoes — Houses on the walls — Use of baskets — City on a hill — Flat roofs — Hiding the spies — Praying on the house-top — Dwelling on the house-top — Place of observation — Use of bells — Grinding at the mill — Song of the grinders — Statute of Moses — Drowning in the sea — Behind the mill — Samson's punishment — Shutting the gates — Use of personal names — A continual dropping — Sale of sparrows — Wells — Mode of drawing water — Watering of flocks — Fountain at Nazareth — Well in a court — Digging through houses — Ordinary dress and food — Purse and scrip — Burial-places — Tomb at Nazareth — An asylum — Rachel's tomb — Stone heaps — An eastern bed — Cursing one's ancestors — Use of orna-

ments—Adventure at El-Bireh—Posture in prayer—Funeral rites—An open bier—The house of Jairus—Early hours—The word “brother”—The Nile a sea—Name of Egypt—Sports of children, . . . . . 52—121

## CHAPTER III.

### CLIMATE, SOIL AND PRODUCTIONS.

Mustard-seed plant—Grass on the house-tops—Thorns—Chastising the men of Succoth—Husks eaten by the prodigal—Tares—Grass of the oven—Anecdote of Mungo Park—Sign of summer—Peculiarity of the fig-tree—A blasting wind—Alternations of heat and cold—A fire by night—Night of the betrayal—Gibbon’s objection—Sources of the error—Scripture misunderstood—One-sided representation—Signs of fertility—Cultivation neglected—Testimony of travelers—Valley of Urtas—Memory of Professor Edwards, . . . . . 122—150

## CHAPTER IV.

### AGRICULTURE, ITS OPERATIONS AND IMPLEMENTS.

Turning the rivers of water—Watering with the foot—The eastern plough—Ox-goad—A proverb of the Hebrews—Treading of grapes—Threshing-floors—Threshing-machine—Winnowing-shovel—Lodges in the fields—Watch-towers—Parable of the vineyard—Hedges—Ancient land-mark—Seed by the road-side—Complaint of the Pharisees—Shunning the public ways—Narrow paths, . . . . . 151—170

## CHAPTER V.

### GEOGRAPHICAL ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE.

Value of such accuracy—Notice of Bethel—Parting of Abraham and Lot—Battle-field of Saul and the Philistines—Situation of Samaria—Discovery at Nineveh—Prophecy fulfilled—Country of the Gadarenes—Advance of the Assyrians—Scenery of Shechem—The tomb of Joseph—Gerizim and Ebal—Jacob’s well—Objection noticed—The lost Bible—The descent to Jericho—Scene of the parable—Healing of the nobleman’s son—Gibeah of Saul—Transmission of Scripture names—Identification of Helbon—Testimony of Ritter, . . . . . 171—217

## CHAPTER VI.

## JEWISH OPINIONS AND USAGES.

The Jews at Jerusalem — Synagogues — Jewish worship — Reading aloud — Copying the Scriptures — Town of Safet — A distinguished Rabbi — Views of the Messiah — The lost tribes — A Jewish festival — Tombs at Meiron — Diversions — Local traditions — The celebration — Ruins of a synagogue — Hills of Galilee — Galilean Tempe — Plain of Akka, . . . . . 218—241

## CHAPTER VII.

## JERUSALEM AND ITS ENVIRONS.

The first view — What is proposed — Site of Jerusalem — The changes of time — View from St. Stephen's gate — Brook Kedron — Gethsemane — Tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat — Fountain of the Virgin — Pool of Siloam — Former reservoirs — Well of En-Rogel — Valley of Hinnom — Death of Judas — The west side — Upper Gihon — The north side — Circuit finished — View from Olivet — Neby Samuil, or Mizpah — Mosque of Omar — The modern Jerusalem — Site of the temple — Castle of Antonia — Pool of Bethesda — Pool of Hezekiah — Pilate's Prætorium — Tomb of David — Grave of Professor Fiske — Bridge over the Tyropœon — The Holy Sepulchre, . . . . . 242—293.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SKETCHES OF PARTICULAR PLACES.

Bethlehem — Nazareth — The latter rain — Excursion to Mount Tabor — Hermits on Tabor — The transfiguration — Prospect from Tabor — View of Hermon — The first miracle of Christ — Mount of the Beatitudes — Descent to Tiberias — The hot baths — A night scene — Scenery of the lake — Storms on the lake — The plain of Gennesaret — The river Kishon — Ascent of Mount Carmel — The Carmelites — View from Mount Carmel — Fertility of Carmel — The ride to Akka — A public parade — Conclusion, . . . . . 294—330.

## LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

---

JERUSALEM, FROM OLIVET (See p. 272), . . . . .	Frontispiece.
ARABS TRAVELING, . . . . .	51
GRINDING AT THE MILL, . . . . .	79
RACHAEL'S SEPULCHRE, . . . . .	102
HUSK IN THE PARABLE, . . . . .	129
RUINS OF SAMARIA, . . . . .	186
JOSEPH'S TOMB, . . . . .	196
ROAD TO JERICHO, . . . . .	207
PLAN OF JERUSALEM, . . . . .	247
TOMBS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT, . . . . .	259
BETHLEHEM, . . . . .	295
NAZARETH, . . . . .	301



# ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### TRAVELING IN THE EAST, AND CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ATTEND IT.

THE title of this chapter (the remark applies also to the other chapters) indicates a general connection between the different topics; but beyond that connection, as the contents of the book are so miscellaneous in their character, no attempt has been made to pursue any particular method. The order of time, in recording the various incidents, might have been followed, but an arrangement of the illustrations on that principle would be less suited to the design of the work than the other plan, imperfect as that confessedly is. As the separate items are, in general, so little dependent on each other, I have thought it best to prefix to them a distinct motto, and thus notify the reader of the transition from one to another.

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#### THE CHILD JESUS LEFT AT JERUSALEM.

The usual rate of traveling in the East is three miles an hour; and as the number of hours devoted to traveling

rarely exceeds six or eight hours, the distance of an ordinary day's journey may be considered as twenty or twenty-five miles. The first day, however, on starting on an expedition, forms an exception to this rule: on that day it is not customary to go more than six or eight miles, and the tents are pitched for the first night's encampment almost within sight of the place from which the journey commences. The sun was hanging low as I left Cairo, on the fifteenth of March, to proceed across the desert to Syria; and after a march of two hours and a half we halted near the obelisk which marks the site of Heliopolis, the On of Scripture, (Genesis 41, 45). The only reason that I heard assigned for starting thus late and stopping so early was, that it furnished an opportunity, if anything should prove to be forgotten, to return to the city and supply the deficiency.

I find, from books of travels, that we merely did in this respect what is customary for travelers in setting forth on a journey; and, further, that they give the same explanation of this peculiarity of the first day. Thus Maundrell says: "We set out from Aleppo at three in the afternoon, intending to make only a short step that evening, in order to prove how well we were provided with necessaries for our journey. Our quarters this first night we took up at a place about one hour and a half west of Aleppo." \* Richardson, the physician of Lord Belmore's party, says that he and his friends proceeded "to Koub el Gourli, about three miles from Cairo, where they found their tents spread, and where they stopped

\* A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem (1697), p. 1.

for the night." \* "We halted early," says Mr. Beldam, "according to custom, the distance being but thirteen miles from Cairo, in order to muster our forces, and ascertain that all things were provided for a longer flight." † "At about two miles from Cairo," says the authoress of "Eastern Life," ‡ "were the green and blue and white tents of the British travelers. I supposed that they had been delayed, and that we should pass them; but no,—our camels were made to lie down, and we were made to dismount, on reaching the camp. This was Bisateer; and the escort never will go further the first day, that there may be an opportunity of supplying any needful article they may have forgotten." On the eighteenth of May the writer left Damascus at eight o'clock A. M., and a little after ten crossed the bridge over the Barrada, probably the Abana of Scripture (2 Kings 5, 12), not far from the village of Dumar. Burckhardt mentions that as the place where his caravan stopped for the night, having started from Damascus only three hours before sunset; § the distance would be about seven miles. The author of "Helen's Pilgrimage," || that beautiful picture of the religious and social life of the Hebrews in the century before the birth of Christ, has shown his wonted accuracy by alluding to the same circumstance. "The first

\* Travels along the Mediterranean, Vol. II., p. 174.

† Recollections of Scenes, &c., in the East (1851), Vol. I., p. 281.

‡ Eastern Life, Vol. II., p. 194.

§ Reisen in Syrien, Vol. I., p. 113.

|| Helen's Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem, Vol. I., p. 63.

day's journey of the pilgrims," he says, "as is usual with caravans, was very short. They traveled scarcely an hour and a half, as far as Gerrha, where they encamped near a fountain." But this practice of restricting the first day's journey, in whatever way it may have arisen, has existed apparently from the earliest times; for we find the stations marked in the itineraries of the oldest travelers in the East, agreeing very remarkably with those mentioned by later travelers. The permanency, therefore, so characteristic of Asiatic life in general, may be supposed to have maintained itself in this respect as it has done in other things.

Perhaps we may avail ourselves of the fact here brought to view, in order to account for an incident in the history of the Saviour, which has appeared to some surprising. I refer to the account of his first visit to Jerusalem, at the age of twelve years. The parents of Jesus are said to have traveled a day's journey on their return, without knowing what had become of their son; they were ignorant whether he was in the company or not, and, as if indifferent respecting his safety, make no inquiry in regard to him till the close of the day. Certain critics (it is one of Strauss' objections) have represented this as so improbable and unnatural as to throw discredit upon the truth of the entire narrative. But if this first day's journey occupied two or three hours only, the difficulty disappears. They had reason to suppose that he was with some of their relatives or friends who were traveling with them; they could act, naturally enough, under that impression for so short a time, and would have no occa-

sion for anxiety until his continued absence, when they came to halt for the night, aroused their fears. We are informed that when this was the case they adopted prompt measures to find the missing one; they showed that their having omitted to keep him constantly at their side was owing to anything but a want of that parental care and love, in which the transaction has been said to cause them to appear so deficient.

Tradition has fixed on El-Bireh, less than three hours north of Jerusalem, as the place where the "Holy Family" stopped at the close of the first day, and whence they turned back to the city, in order to seek the child, on discovering that he was absent. We can attach, indeed, no historical value to this tradition; but it is instructive in this respect, that it has selected that particular station because parties traveling to the north from Jerusalem are accustomed to spend the first night there, and, in all probability, it has been the resting-place of caravans on that journey from time immemorial. What route the parents of Jesus actually took, on that occasion, we cannot decide. The Galilean caravans (they traveled with one, as we see from Luke 2, 44), in order to avoid Samaria, usually crossed the ford of the Jordan near Bethshean, now Beisan, into Perea, then passed down on the east side of the Jordan, re-crossed the river near Jericho, and ascended to Jerusalem through the desert which lies between the two cities. A company returning to Galilee by the same route would be apt to stop, for the first night, near the eastern foot of the Mount of Olives; a ride,

at a foot-pace, of not more than two hours. They would not be likely to go further the first day, because that would oblige them to encamp in a hostile region. How entirely natural that in such a crowd the members of a family should be separated from each other for two or three hours, and especially when one of the objects of stopping so soon was to see whether the party was complete, whether all had arrived at the place of rendezvous.

#### THE DECEITFUL BROOK.

On the second of April I crossed a stone bridge over the bed of a stream to the right of the village of Kulonieh, an hour and a half north-west of Jerusalem. It was then entirely destitute of water. Prokesch,\* a German traveler, who passed here a few weeks later in the season, speaks of it as a rushing stream when he saw it. Otto von Richter,† who was here in August, though he mentions the place under a wrong name, says that it contained then a little water. Salzbacher,‡ who saw the brook near the end of June, says that it was entirely dry. Richardson, an English traveler, speaks of it on the fifteenth of April as "a small brook, trickling down through the valley."§ The stream is evidently a very uncertain one. It varies not only in winter and summer, but at the same season in different years. It

\* Reise ins heilige Land (1829), p. 41.

† Wallfahrten inr Morganlande (1815), p. 15.

‡ Erinnerungen aus meiner Pilgerreise (1837), Vol. II., p. 31.

§ Travels along the Mediterranean, Vol. II., p. 236.

may be taken, however, as a fair example of what is true of Eastern brooks in general. They flow with water during the rainy season; but, after that, are liable to be soon dried up, or, if they contain water, contain it only for a longer or shorter time, according to their situation and the severity of the heat of particular years. Hence, the traveler in quest of water must often be disappointed when he comes to such streams. He may find them entirely dry; or, he may find the water gone at the place where he approaches them, though it may still linger in other places which elude his observation; he may perceive, from the moisture of the ground, that the last drops have just disappeared, and that he has arrived but a few hours too late for the attainment of his object.

The chances of obtaining water in the desert are equally precarious. The winter torrents there, owing to the rapidity with which the sand absorbs them, are still more transient. The spring, which supplied a well yesterday, may fail to-day; or the drifting sand may choke it up, and obliterate every trace of it. On the ninth day of my journey, after leaving Cairo, we heard of a well at some distance from the regular course, and, as the animals (except the camels) needed to be watered, we turned aside to visit the place. We traveled for some miles over immense sand-heaps and under a burning sun, with the thermometer at ninety degrees of Fahrenheit. It was our lot to be disappointed. We found the well, indeed, but without a drop of water in it that could be reached by us. The wind had blown the sand into it, and

buried it up to such a depth, that all hope of relief from that source was cut off.

This liability of a person in the East to be deceived in his expectation of finding water is the subject of repeated allusion in the Scriptures. In Job 6, 15, sq., it furnishes an expressive image for representing the fickleness and treachery of false-hearted friends.

“ My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a brook,  
As the channel of brooks which pass away ;  
Which are turbid by reason of the ice,  
In which is hidden the melted snow.  
As soon as the waters flow off they are gone ;  
When the heat comes, they vanish from their place.  
The caravans on their way turn aside ;  
They go up into the desert, and perish.  
The caravans of Tema search anxiously ,  
The wayfarers of Sheba look to them with hope.  
They are ashamed because they trusted in them ;  
They come to them and are confounded.”

Our English version of the above passage fails to bring out the image distinctly. The foregoing translation, which I have brought nearer to the original, may be made clearer, perhaps, by a word of explanation. The idea is, that in spring the streams are full ; they rush along swollen from the effect of the melting snow and ice. Summer comes, and they can no longer be trusted. Those journeying in the region of such streams, fainting with thirst, travel many a weary step out of the way, in quest of them, in the hope that water may still be found in them. They arrive at the

place, but only to be disappointed. The deceitful brook has fled. They were in the last extremity — it was their last hope, and they die.

Tema is a region in the north of the Arabian Desert; Sheba a region of Arabia Felix. "Caravans," says Umbreit,\* "from these particular places are mentioned to give life and individuality to the picture." The scene is laid in Arabia, because it is in that country especially that travelers are liable to suffer from want of water.

Another passage where the same comparison occurs is Jeremiah 15, 18:

"Why is my affliction perpetual,  
And my wound incurable?  
It will not be healed.  
Thou art to me as a lying brook,  
As waters which are not enduring."

#### SLIDING OF THE FEET.

A few hours beyond Wady† Aly, on the way to Jerusalem, from the ancient Joppa, now Jaffa, I had my first experience of some of the worst evils of an eastern road. It is hardly correct, indeed, to speak of such a thing as a road in Palestine. Carriages are now unknown there; and the thoroughfares consist merely of tracks worn by the feet of the beasts of burden. As the country is hilly, with the exception of a few extensive

\* Commentar über die Propheten.

† This is the oriental term for a valley or depression through which a stream flows in the rainy season.

plains, and as the tops of the hills generally present a surface of denuded rocks, the paths over them are not only rugged and narrow, but often ascend and descend almost as steeply as a flight of stairs. Nothing but the singular expertness of the animals trained to this sort of traveling enables them to climb these heights and maintain their foothold; and, even with that advantage, missteps may occur, not a little dangerous. In addition to this, the paths conduct one often to the edge of precipices and fissures, which expose him still more. Stepping a few feet the wrong way, perhaps treading on a rolling stone, or the sudden start of his horse or mule, may cause his destruction. Of this character, for instance, was a part of the way between Kuryet-El-Enab (supposed to be the ancient Kirjath Jearim) and Jerusalem. We were obliged to dismount in some places, and pick our way on foot.

This physical configuration of the country and the nature of the roads have originated a mode of speaking in the Bible, the force of which is not always perceived. I refer to the passages which represent it as so calamitous a thing for the traveler to fall, stumble, have his feet slide, and the like. Thus, it is said of the wise son, in Proverbs 3, 23: "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble." See, also, Proverbs 4, 12. In Jeremiah 31, 9, the safety of a straight path is opposed to one in which men are liable to stumble. See, also, Jeremiah 50, 32. In Psalm 38, 17, the Psalmist prays that his enemies might not "rejoice over him when his foot slippeth;" and in Psalm 66, 9, he says of the righteous, that God "holdeth

their soul in life, and suffereth not their feet to be moved." In Deuteronomy 22, 35, God says of the wicked: "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time."

I can never forget the vividness with which the significance of this figure, in such applications as the last, was brought home to me on one particular occasion. I was going from Tekoa (Amos 1, 1) to Khureitun,\* where is one of the most remarkable caves in Palestine, called traditionally the cave of Adullam, though without sufficient reason. The road crowded us into a narrow foot-path between a high cliff, on the right hand, and an immense ravine, hundreds of feet deep, on the left. It was almost enough to make the head reel to look into the horrid chasm. A slight confusion of mind, a shelving rock, a slip of the foot, would have hurled horse and rider to destruction in a moment. After a rain, such places must be still more dangerous; since the ground would then be slippery, and the smaller stones more or less loosened. As an image of the doom of the wicked, what could be more expressive to the minds of those accustomed to such perils than the words, "Their feet shall slide in due time"?

#### PILGRIM PSALMS.

It was a pleasing coincidence to recollect, as I was approaching Jerusalem, that an allusion to this kind of danger

\* This may be a corruption for Kerieth, a city of Judah (Joshua 15, 25); and if so, it was the home of Judas the traitor, who was thence called Iscariot, that is, man of Kerieth. It is a few miles south of Bethlehem.

occurs in one of the Psalms of Degrees or Pilgrimages (121—134) : a class of Psalms composed for the use of the Hebrews as they went up to celebrate the yearly festival in the capital of the nation. Nothing could be more natural than that the pious worshipper, after having surmounted the peculiar dangers of such a journey, should single out his exemption from the casualties of the way as a special mark of the divine goodness to him.

“He suffers not thy foot to slide ;  
Thy Keeper slumbers not.  
Behold, he neither slumbers nor sleeps  
Who is the Keeper of Israel.”

How often may these words have given utterance to the grateful joy with which the pilgrim from Galilee, who had crossed the steep mountains of Ephraim, or the pilgrim from the south of Judah, who had pursued his way over lofty summits and along the verge of precipices, having reached at length the holy city, has looked back, almost with shuddering, upon the perils which attended his steps, and blessed the care which watched over him, and brought him in safety to the goal of his hopes and desires !

“Standing now are our feet  
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem !  
Whither go up the tribes,  
The tribes of Jehovah, as prescribed to Israel,  
To give thanks to the name of Jehovah.  
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ;  
May they prosper who love thee.

May peace be within thy walls,  
Prosperity within thy palaces."

## MODERN PILGRIMAGES.

It may be added here that modern pilgrims in the East, like the ancient Hebrews, are accustomed to enliven their march with music and song. The caravans that go annually from Cairo to Mecca, and from Damascus to Mecca, have their pilgrim hymns, which they chant on the way. Compositions designed for this use fill a large space in the popular religious literature of the Mohammedans. So, too, the oriental Christians, as the Greeks, Copts and others, who go up to Jerusalem in such numbers to commemorate the holy week, make the country resound with their songs as they approach the end of their journey. It fell in my way to see, or rather to hear, something of this on one occasion.

On the afternoon of April first, we encamped early at Ramleh, in the plain of Sharon, whence we could see the tall minaret which distinguishes Ludd, the ancient Lydda. See Acts 9, 32, sq. Procuring a Turkish cavass or soldier as an escort, I separated myself from the rest of the party and rode across the plain to that village. On the way thither, soon after leaving Ramleh, I passed a large company of pilgrims, who had halted for the night under the trees by the road-side; there were men, women, and children too of every age, with camels, horses and donkeys, and heaps of luggage scattered in confusion around them. They were traveling to the holy city, and had now arrived within a day's march of their

destination. In the course of the following night they broke up their encampment at an early hour, and long before day-break passed our tents at Ramleh. They were full of joy naturally at the thought of so much of their pilgrimage accomplished in safety, and at the prospect of its speedy termination. It was truly exciting to listen, in the otherwise still night, to their jubilant voices, as, in chorus or singly, they sung the hymns expressive of their feelings under such circumstances. The scene carried back my thoughts forcibly to the time when bands of the countrymen of David, Isaiah and Daniel, approached Jerusalem on a similar errand, and woke up the silence of night with strains not less impassioned, and, as we would hope, not less religious. The Psalms are full of sentiments which would occur to the mind at such a time. With what depth of meaning could the pious heart have said :

“ How lovely are thy abodes, Jehovah of hosts !

My soul longs and faints for the courts of Jehovah ;

My heart and my flesh,

They cry aloud for the living God.

“ Blessed are they that dwell in thy house !

They shall still be praising thee.

Better is a day in thy courts than a thousand (elsewhere) ;

I would rather stand at the door of the house of my God

Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

“ Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion

More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Glorious things are spoken of thee,

O city of God !

Beautiful for situation, joy of all the earth,  
Is Mount Zion, city of the great King."

The foregoing passages occur in the forty-eighth, the eighty-fourth and the eighty-seventh Psalms.

#### PASTURES OF THE DESERT.

It is a common idea that the country between the eastern arm of the Nile and the south of Palestine is entirely destitute of vegetation; but the idea is not correct. One exception to the general dreariness of the desert is found in the occurrence of an occasional oasis—a little island of verdure amid an ocean of comparative desolation, where a few Arabs spread their tents beneath the tall palms, and, in addition to the care of their flocks, cultivate the little tract, which a running stream or a fountain enables them to irrigate and render fertile. Between Salahieh, on the edge of the desert, and the entrance to the holy land, two such oases gladden the eyes of the traveler. One of these is Katieh, which we reached on the seventh day from Cairo, where was a grove of palms, a small Arab encampment, and a good well of water. The other is El Arish, on the boundary between Egypt and Syria, a large village. It was the Botany Bay of the Pharaohs, whither they banished their convicts, after having slit their noses as an ineffaceable mark of their character as felons. The Greeks called it *Rhinocoura*, with reference to this mutilation. The Hebrews, during their wanderings in the wilderness, encamped often at places of this description.

Another peculiarity of the desert is that, though the soil is sandy, it rarely consists, for successive days together, of mere sand ; it is interspersed, at frequent intervals, with clumps of coarse grass and low shrubs, affording very good pasturage, not only for camels, the proper tenants of the desert, but for sheep and goats. The people of the villages on the borders of the desert are accustomed to lead forth their flocks to the pastures found there. We frequently passed on our way shepherds so employed ; and it was interesting to observe as a verification of what is implied in the Saviour's statement (Matthew 25, 33), that the sheep and goats were not kept distinct, but intermixed with one another. The shepherds not only frequent the parts of the desert near their places of abode, but go often to a considerable distance from them ; they remain absent for weeks and months, only changing their station from time to time, as their wants in respect to water and herbage may require. The incident related of Moses shows that the pastoral habits of the people were the same in his day : "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian ; and he led the flock to the further part of the desert, even to Horeb." (Exodus 3, 1.) It is of the desert in this sense, as supplying to some extent the means of pasturage, that the prophet Joel speaks in 1, 19, and 2, 22. The Psalmist also says (65, 12, 13), with the same reference :

"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness,  
And thy paths drop fatness ;  
They drop fatness on the pastures of the wilderness."

Indeed, the Hebrew idea of the term was still more extensive. Tracts of country comparatively fertile are called deserts, in the Bible, when they are remote from towns and but thinly inhabited. Hence we read in the Gospels that John, the forerunner of Christ, preached and baptized in the wilderness, and crowds resorted to him there to hear him.

#### LAND OF GOSHEN.

It was not until the third or fourth day after leaving Cairo that we entered upon the desert properly so called. During the previous days our journey lay along the borders of the ancient Goshen — a fertile tract east of the Nile, and still favorably distinguished above other parts of Egypt for its adaptation to the wants of an agricultural people. “The land of Egypt is before thee,” said Pharaoh to Joseph; “in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell.” (Genesis 47, 6.) That Goshen lay on the east side of the Nile is not to be doubted; for it is nowhere intimated in the Bible that Jacob, on his arrival in Egypt, or the Israelites, on their departure from it, crossed that river. It results also from such passages as Genesis 47, 1, and Exodus 13, 17, that this district stretched towards Palestine, as well as, from the history of the flight of the Hebrews, that it was not far from the Red Sea. Hence, the traveler’s journey, on the route which I followed, conducts him through the northern part of that region so famous in the history of the Israelites.

The advantage of such a situation to the Hebrews was two-

fold; they had there the benefit of all the abundance of the valley of the Nile (see Numbers 11, 5), and at the same time could drive out their flocks for pasture to the neighboring desert. It was curious to observe here the close proximity between verdant fields and the unreclaimed wilderness. On one side were gardens of vegetables, rich harvests of wheat and maize, and groves of palm-trees; and on the other, at the distance of a single foot beyond the point reached by the overflowing of the Nile, or by artificial irrigation, was nothing but sand and sterility. All that is needed, in order to reclaim from waste a still greater portion of the desert, is a proper amount of enterprise and skill on the part of the inhabitants in the construction of canals for the purpose of distributing the water of the Nile beyond its natural limit. No doubt, in the best days of Egypt, when the population was so much greater than it is at present, the resources of the country, in this respect, were more fully developed, and extensive regions, which now lie waste, teemed with life and the fruits of a thriving cultivation.

At intervals, during the first days of the journey, the ground was thickly strown with small stones, of different shapes and colors, among which were the onyx, chalcedony, agate, and the like. Their number and sparkling lustre, as seen under a brilliant sunshine, caused them to resemble (with some grain of allowance for the figure) a pavement of rich mosaic. I was not aware that the desert had such a phase to offer amid its diversities of appearance; the sight was as unexpected as it was novel and beautiful.

## ACCURACY OF GENESIS 42, 26.

The family of Jacob, during the prevalence of the famine in Canaan, appear to have been living at Hebron. The sons of the patriarch, when they went into Egypt to buy corn, would naturally have taken the shortest course thither, and, hence, must have passed, by the way of Gaza or Beersheba, across the isthmus, through the northern part of the desert of Shur. It has been said that, owing to the want of water, no animals except camels can perform this journey; and hence the statement that Joseph's brethren transported their corn on "asses" (Genesis 42, 26. 27) has been alleged as an objection to the truth of the account. One of the current approved manuals on the geography of Palestine disposes of this objection by urging that the desert may have changed its character; that formerly it was better supplied with water than it is at present.

But it is not true that horses, mules, donkeys, cannot be used in this region; though camels are employed for the most part, and are more serviceable. Several donkeys accompanied the caravan in which I traveled through the same desert. I myself rode on horseback the whole way; though the others who composed the party, with the exception of one, rode on camels. Near the middle of the desert we met a company of Syrians, who had in charge several splendid Arab horses, which they were carrying as a present from the Pasha of Damascus to the Pasha of Egypt. Water for our own use we carried with us in skin bottles; but relied on



the supplies of the desert for watering the animals. The camels drank but once on the way, which was on the seventh day after leaving Cairo, at Katieh, already mentioned; they drank readily, but not at all immoderately or eagerly as if oppressed with thirst. The other animals, whose different physical organization did not allow them to be fastidious, were willing to drink of the muddy, brackish water which can be scooped out of the sand in several places where the surface of the desert sinks down into an occasional basin or ravine. It was sometimes a scanty supply even of such water that we could obtain; but the suffering creatures made that suffice until they could reach at length a place where they could satisfy their wants more freely. Of the twelve days which the journey occupied, there was but one, if I remember right, when we were not able to procure a small quantity of water, of some sort, for the relief of our beasts of burden. The notice, therefore, respecting the animals which Jacob's sons employed does not oblige us either to impeach the accuracy of the sacred narrative, or to suppose, for the purpose of upholding its character, that any change has taken place in regard to the difficulties or facilities which attend a journey through this particular desert.

#### AN EASTERN SKY AT NIGHT.

The appearance of an eastern sky at night is quite peculiar, displaying to the eye a very different aspect from our sky. Not only is the number of stars visible greater than we are accustomed to see, but they shine with a brilliancy

and purity of lustre of which our heavens very seldom furnish an example. Homer's comparison, at the beginning of the Fifth Book of the Iliad,

“—— bright and steady as the star  
Autumnal, which in ocean newly bathed  
Assumes fresh beauty ——” \*

was often brought to mind, as I remarked the fresh, unsullied splendor, as it were, of the more brilliant constellations.

An oriental sky has another peculiarity, which adds very much to its impressive appearance. With us the stars seem to adhere to the face of the heavens; they form the most distant objects within the range of vision; they appear to be set in a groundwork of thick darkness, beyond which the eye does not penetrate. Unlike this is the canopy which night spreads over the traveler in Eastern climes. The stars there seem to hang, like burning lamps, midway between heaven and earth; the pure atmosphere enables us to see a deep expanse of blue ether lying far beyond them. The hemisphere above us glows and sparkles with innumerable fires, that appear as if kept burning in their position by an immediate act of the Omnipotent, instead of resting on a framework which subserves the illusion of seeming to give to them their support.

Never can I forget my first night in the desert, in traveling from Egypt to Palestine. I had entered the tent erected for me, about dark, and, being occupied there for some time, the

shadows of evening in the mean while insensibly gathered around us; the stars came forth one after another, and commenced their nightly watch. On going abroad, at length, a scene of surpassing beauty and grandeur burst upon me. I was in the midst of a level tract of sand, where no intervening object rose up to intercept the view; the horizon which swept around me was as expanded as the power of human vision could make it; and all this vast circuit, as I glanced from the right hand to the left, and from the edge of the sky to the zenith, was glittering with countless stars, each of which seemed radiant with a distinct light of its own; many of which shone with something of the splendor of planets of the first magnitude. I could not resist the impulse of the moment, but taking my Hebrew Bible, read, with a new impression of its meaning, the sublime language of the Psalmist :

“Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent thy name in all the earth,  
Who hast placed thy glory upon the heavens !  
When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers ;  
The moon and stars which thou hast made ;  
What is man, that thou art mindful of him,  
And the son of man, that thou carest for him ?”

I remembered, too, that it was probably in some such situation as this in which I was then placed, and on an evening like this, that Abraham was directed to go abroad, and “look towards heaven, and tell the stars if he could number them,” and thus form an idea of the multitude of the posterity destined to be called after his name. (Genesis 15, 5.) I

turned to that passage also, and saw a grandeur in the comparison, of which I had possessed hitherto but a vague conception.

#### USE OF TENTS IN THE EAST.

The use of tents in Africa and Western Asia extends back to the earliest times. In Genesis 4, 20, it is said that Jabel "was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." Abraham was a tenant of one of these changeable abodes during all his life. Of Isaac we read that he "pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar and dwelt there." (Genesis 12, 8.) "Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." (Genesis 25, 27.) The Hebrews lived in tents during all their sojourn in the wilderness. Though they had towns and houses of stone, after they took possession of the promised land, many of them still led a wandering, pastoral life, and occupied tents, like their fathers. Such statements as the following are frequent in the Old Testament: "On the eighth day Solomon sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents." (1 Kings 8, 66.) "Every man to his tents, O Israel" (2 Samuel 20, 1), was the common watchword for dismissing the people to their homes. "And the people fled into their tents." (2 Kings 8, 21.) "And the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime." (2 Kings 13, 5.) Gideon "sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent." (Judges 7, 8.) A great many of the inhabitants of the East live in the same way at the present time. A custom, so general and permanent, would be expected to influence the language of the people.

Many scriptural illustrations are drawn from this source. The poetry of David, who was a shepherd's son, abounds in reminiscences of his first occupation. Some of the most touching passages in the history of the patriarchs are connected with their tent-life. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, it will be remembered, was a tent-maker.

It was my lot to live in one of these primitive abodes for several weeks. This gave me an opportunity to form some acquaintance with this phase of oriental life. The tents used by foreigners are not like those of the natives in all respects; but they are so far fashioned after the same model, and employed under circumstances so similar, that the traveler is constantly reminded of allusions to this subject in the Bible, and led to perceive a force in them, which nothing but some experience of this kind could so adequately disclose to him.

#### PITCHING OF THE TENT.

The pitching of the tent forms the first labor, at the close of the day, in preparing for the night. An upright pole is fixed in the ground, and the canvas is then stretched out around it by means of cords fastened at one end to the upper part or roof of the tent, having loop-holes at the other end, through which a stake or wooden peg is passed and then driven into the ground with a mallet. The tents of the Arabs are secured in the same manner, though when occupied by families they are larger and rest often on a framework of several poles. Every one sees here the origin of a mode of speaking which shows clearly where the Scriptures

were written. It is said of God, as the Creator: "He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." (Isaiah 40, 22.) The prophet, as he looks forward to a happier day for the people of God, says: "Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." (Isaiah 33, 20.) Again, in anticipation of accessions to their number, he exclaims: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and the left." (Isaiah 54, 2.)

The putting up and taking down of the tents, at the present day, is the same operation, beyond doubt, that it was at the time when the Bible was written. The nail and mallet or hammer are mentioned as a part of the "household stuff" in the story of Jael and Sisera. Many a traveler can say, with Lord Lindsay,\* that he never saw a tent-pin driven without calling to mind that narrative. (Judges 4, 17, sq.) Our English version obscures a part of the meaning, in certain passages. Thus, in Genesis 12, 9, where it is said, "Abraham journeyed, going on still," a more literal translation would be, "He pulled up," namely, his tent-pins, "going and pulling up," as he advanced from one station to another. So, in Genesis 33, 12, instead of "Let us take our journey and go," it should be, "Let us pull up the pins of

\* Letters on the Holy Land, 4th ed., p. 166.

our tents, and let us go." The same allusion occurs in Genesis 35, 21; 46, 1; Exodus 13, 20, and elsewhere. Hence, our successive encampments, as we journeyed through the desert, brought back to us, in our own experience, something (to use the words of Thomson)

" of the patriarchal age,  
What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,  
And pastured on from stage to stage,  
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage."

#### FREQUENT REMOVALS.

The tents of the East, as intimated already, seldom remain long in the same place. The traveler erects his temporary abode for the night, takes it down in the morning, and journeys onward. The shepherds of the country, also, are constantly moving from one place to another. The brook fails on which they relied for water, or the grass required for the support of their flocks is consumed, and they wander to a new station. "There is something very melancholy," writes Lord Lindsay, "in our morning flittings. The tent-pins are plucked up, and in a few minutes a dozen holes, a heap or two of ashes, and the marks of the camels' knees in the sand, soon to be obliterated, are the only traces left of what has been, for a while, our home." Hence, this rapid change of situation, this removal from one spot to another, without being able to foresee to-day where the wanderer will rest to-morrow, affords a striking image of man's life—so brief, fleeting, uncertain. Thus Hezekiah felt in the near prospect of

death : "Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent." (Isaiah 38, 12.) Jacob calls his life a pilgrimage (Genesis 47, 9), with reference to the same expressive idea. The body, as the temporary home of the soul, is called a "tent," or "tabernacle," because it is so frail and perishable. Thus Paul says, in 2 Corinthians 5, 1 : "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved" (taken down is the proper term), "we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The apostle Peter employs the same figure : "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance ; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." (2 Peter 1, 13.)

## REMARKS OF McCHEYNE.

The following remarks of Mr. McCheyne,\* one of the Scotch delegation to the Jews in Palestine, breathe the spirit of a true Christian pilgrim. They have a more tender interest from the fact that he who wrote them was called so soon to finish his wanderings, and exchange the earthly tabernacle for his permanent home in heaven. Speaking of his journey through the desert, he says : "Living in tents, and moving among such lonely scenes for many days, awakened many new ideas. It was a strange life that we led in the wilderness. Round and round was a complete

\* Life and Remains of the Rev. Robert M. McCheyne, by Rev. A. A. Bonar.

circle of sand and wilderness shrubs ; above, a blue sky without a cloud, and a scorching sun. When evening came the sun went down as it does in the ocean, and the stars came riding forth in their glory ; and we used to pitch our tents all alone, with none but the poor Bedouins and the camels, and our all-knowing, all-loving God, beside us. When morning began to dawn our habitations were taken down ; often we found ourselves shelterless before being fully dressed. What a type of the tent of our body ! Ah ! how often taken down before the soul is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light ! ”

It was amid such scenes — scenes too suggestive of such reflections — that the patriarchs spent most of their days. One can hardly open the early pages of the Bible anywhere, and not discover a new meaning in them when he reads them in the light of such descriptions. It will be seen, too, from this example, how readily a person falls into the use of the same figures when placed in the situation of the sacred writers.

#### THE TENTS OF KEDAR.

The goats of the East are commonly black, and a species of cloth is made from their skins, having the same color. This is the article commonly used by the Arabs for covering their tents. In approaching Bethlehem from the direction of the desert, I passed an encampment of this people, whose tents were all made of this black cloth, and which presented a striking appearance, especially as contrasted with the white canvas tents to which I had been accustomed hitherto, and

which travelers so generally employ in that country. At Tekoa, Amos' birth-place, six miles south of Bethlehem, I beheld a similar scene. The settlement there consisted of two small groups of tents, one larger than the other; they were covered with the black cloth before mentioned, supported on several poles, and turned up in part on one side, so that a person from without could look into the interior. The Arab tents which I saw on the Phœnician plain, between Tyre and Sidon, were covered with the same material. In crossing the mountains of Lebanon, the path of the traveler leads him often along the brow of lofty summits, overlooking deep valleys, at the bottom of which may be seen the long black tents of migratory shepherds.

It is this aspect of a Bedouin encampment that supplies the comparison in Solomon's Song (1, 5): "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." It is the just remark of a certain traveler that "It would be often difficult to ascribe the epithet 'comely' to the tents of the orientals, viewed singly; but as forming part of a prospect they are a very beautiful object." Being pitched often in the midst of verdant meadows watered by a running brook, their appearance, as beheld by the distant observer, is the more pleasing from the contrast of colors which strike the eye. The pure atmosphere and brilliant sunshine of the East, it will be remembered, give an almost prismatic effect to every object.

I add, for the sake of explanation, that Kedar was the name of an Arabian or Ishmaelitish tribe, who, like nomadic

wanderers in general, appear to have dwelt in different places at different times. They are mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament. The Psalmist, for instance (120, 5), alludes to them in the expression, "Woe is me that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" They seem to have had a bad pre-eminence above others of their race as a quarrelsome, belligerent people.

#### SAND-HILLS.

With the exception of bleak, rocky mountains (which are to be seen only at a distance), the journey to Palestine through the desert of Suez presents examples of every variety of scenery to be found on any of the customary routes to the holy land. During parts of two different days, out of the thirteen that we spent in the wilderness, the aspect of the desert was wild and dreary in a manner fully equal to the expectations which I had formed of such regions. We spent one night, in particular, in the midst of a solitude sublimely terrific in its character. During the erection of the tent I strolled away alone, and mounted with some difficulty to the top of one of the huge sand-hills. There I sat down, and from that "spectral mount" looked abroad upon the scene which surrounded me. As far as the eye could reach, except in one quarter where were a few dwarfish palm-trees, nothing was to be seen but sand-heaps piled up in every variety of fantastic shape. In one direction they rose up abruptly to a great height, like pointed shafts or pyramids; in another, without being so high, they took the form of hillocks, following each other like a succession of rolling

waves. Sometimes they formed sand-banks, sloping away gradually on one side to a great distance, while the other side terminated almost perpendicularly, with the tops curling over like a crested wave just as it is ready to break. Sometimes, again, both sides sloped down gradually, while the line where they met at the top presented an appearance like the extended ridge of the roof of a house. The natural inequalities of the ground modified no doubt the contour of the landscape. It was a desolate scene, and, as I looked upon it, I was reminded of poor Selkirk's soliloquy :—

“ O solitude ! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face ?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms  
Than reign in this horrible place.”

It was easy to imagine, with such a spectacle before me, what the effect must be when a storm of wind, such as often arises in the desert, has put such sand-heaps in motion. I could credit the stories which are related of entire caravans (some say armies) having been overwhelmed and destroyed by the drifting sands of the desert. I can think of no expression which describes my feelings at the moment so exactly as the graphic delineation in Deuteronomy 32, 10 : it was verily “ a waste howling wilderness.”

#### TERRORS OF THE DESERT.

The Hebrews, on their departure from Egypt, wandered for forty years in the region between that country and Palestine. Their experience during that time left an impression on the

national mind respecting the terrors of the wilderness, which was never effaced. Their vicinity to the same uncultivated, desolate tracts, after their settlement in the promised land, kept up their familiarity with the characteristics of the desert. It was to them the land over which brooded every frightful evil; where men pined with hunger and thirst; where the sun smote them by day, and the cold pained them by night; where reptiles, whose sting was death, nestled among the rocks and in holes of the earth; where sand-storms bewildered and overwhelmed the traveler; where winds swept from the south, scattering pestilence and destruction in their way. It is not surprising that the Hebrew imagination had recourse often to this ample store-house for terrific imagery. How forcible, for instance, is Jeremiah's appeal to his countrymen when he would reprove them for forgetting God's great deliverance in their behalf!

“ ——— Where is Jehovah,  
Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt —  
He who led us through the wilderness,  
Through the land of the desert and pit-falls,  
Through the land of drought and the shadow of death,  
Through the land wherein no one wanders,  
And where no man dwells? ”

The Psalmist, when he would set forth the punishment of the wicked, says (11, 6) :

“ He shall rain upon the transgressors  
Snares, fire and brimstone, and burning blasts ;  
——— the portion of their cup.”

The "blasts" refer undoubtedly to the Simûm, a poisonous wind which occurs in the desert; the other terms may refer to the overthrow of the cities of the plain.

The serpents which infested the Israelites were among the evils from which they suffered. In "that great and terrible wilderness were fiery serpents and scorpions," as Moses reminds them in his last instructions (Deuteronomy 8, 15). They still abound in the same and similar places. A few weeks later than the time of my journey they are said to be so numerous as to expose the traveler to great danger. It requires special caution, in arranging the bed at night, to guard against their attacks. One day we saw in our path an asp, a foot long, coiled up in the attitude of springing; which the Arabs killed, saying that it was exceedingly venomous. A few hours later on the same day, in turning up an old garment on the ground, they found another reptile, of a different species, but also malignant. The feet and legs, not only of the men, but of the animals which they ride, are liable to be bitten under such circumstances. We see the force here of Jacob's language, in describing the subtle character of the tribe of Dan. "He shall be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward." (Genesis 49, 17.)

Dr. Shaw, the traveler, says, that, in the desert east of the Red Sea, just where the Israelites encountered this plague, he found the evil still unremoved. "Vipers, especially in the wilderness of Sin (Exodus 16, 1), were very dangerous and troublesome; not only our camels, but the Arabs who

attended them, running every moment the risk of being bitten.”\*

#### SKIN AND LEATHER BOTTLES.

The use of skin bottles prevails still very extensively in all parts of western Asia; though earthen bottles are also common, and were so in ancient times, as we know both from Scripture and from explorations in Egypt and at Nineveh. I did not happen to notice them at Alexandria, where I entered on my oriental wanderings; but at Cairo I saw them at almost every turn in the streets, and on the backs of the water-carriers between that city and Bulak, its port on the Nile. After that I met with them constantly, wherever I traveled, both in Egypt and Syria. They are made of the skins of animals, especially of the goat, and in various forms. They are more commonly made so as to retain the figure of the animal from which the skin is taken. The process is said to be this: they cut off the head of the goat, kid, or sheep, as the case may be, and then strip off the skin whole from the body, without cutting it except at the extremities. The neck constitutes the mouth of the bottle; and, as the only places that need to be sewed up are where the feet were cut off, the skin, when distended with water, has precisely the appearance or form of the animal to which it belonged. That bottles of this shape have been used in the eastern countries from the earliest antiquity, that they were common in the days of the patriarchs and the Pharaohs, I had an interest-

\* Travels relating to parts of Barbary and the Levant, &c., Vol. II., p. 338 (1808).

ing proof in one of the tombs near the Ghizeh pyramids. Among the figures on the walls I saw a goat-shaped bottle, as exactly like those now seen in Cairo, as if it had been painted from one of them by a modern artist. It was not a "bottle," in our sense of the word, but "water-skin," according to the Hebrew, which Abraham took and placed on the shoulder of Hagar, when he sent her forth into the desert. (Genesis 21, 14.)

Bottles are also made of leather, dressed for the purpose, and are of various sizes, from the pouch containing two or three quarts, which the traveler may sling over his shoulder, to the ox-hide in which caravans preserve their supplies of water on long journeys, when they meet with brooks or cisterns only at distant intervals. In the course of time such vessels become rigid and brittle; and hence arose the necessity of putting new wine into new bottles, because it is only while they are fresh and flexible that they can withstand the pressure of fermentation; on the contrary, old wine, which is past that process, may be put with safety into old bottles.

#### ARTIFICE OF THE GIBEONITES.

When these bottles, from long-continued use, become rent or break away, they are sewed up, or have patches put on them; and, as the result of such repairs, they often present an exceedingly ragged and piebald appearance. With this fact before us, we can understand the *ruse de guerre* to which the Gibeonites resorted when they attempted to impose themselves on Joshua as strangers from a distant

country. "They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors; and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine-bottles (properly skins), old and rent, bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them, and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy; they went to Joshua at Gilgal" (but a few miles, in fact, from their own homes), "and said unto him and the men of Israel, We be come from a far country; now, therefore, make ye a league with us." (Joshua 9, 4—6.)

#### VALLEY OF DEATH-SHADE.

Soon after leaving the Plain of Sharon, and beginning to ascend the "hill country of Judea," we entered Wady Aly, which I have mentioned before. We pursued our course here for some time along the dry bottom of the valley, over which a torrent flows in winter. It is a long, deep ravine, extremely wild and dreary on both sides. It is sometimes so narrow as scarcely to allow the traveler to pass between the rocky walls which enclose it. In some places these mount up so high, with overhanging crags, and are so thickly shaded at the top with clumps of bushes, as to spread a gloom, a sort of twilight, over the chasm below. It was forcibly suggested to me that it may have been David's familiarity with such scenes that led him to employ the expressive imagery in the fourth verse of the twenty-third Psalm:—

"When I walk through the valley of death-shade  
I will fear no evil;  
For thou art with me;  
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

It is the Great Shepherd whom the Psalmist addresses here, who says of himself, in the New Testament, "I am the good shepherd;—the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10, 11. 14.) The "rod and the staff" are the emblems of his office, the pledge and means of the security which he extends to his flock. "Valley of the shadow of death," or of death-shade, is an orientalism, denoting a gloomy valley; one on which rests a death-like darkness. It is meant to be applied here to every scene of tribulation and sorrow; not to death alone, but all the trials of life through which mortals are called to pass, and under which they need the support of a consciousness of the divine presence and favor.

The appearance of Wady Aly brought to mind the Psalmist's language the more readily, because I noticed, here and there on the hill-sides, flocks of goats and sheep, feeding on the shrubbery, or wandering from place to place, under the eye of the watchful shepherd. The mountainous parts of Palestine abound in such ravines; and it is only in a country marked by that peculiarity that the expression here referred to could come into use. Travelers speak of a similar rent between the rocks a little south of Carmel, on the way to Jaffa, which actually bears the name of "Valley of Death-shade."

I find that Dr. Wilson, author of "Lands of the Bible," was led to record a similar observation. Of the grand chasm, or eastern entrance of Petrea, he says, "The rocks are quite precipitous on each side, and so rough and rugged and near to one another — not more than twelve or fourteen feet apart

—that they seem ready to collapse and crush the traveler. Their height may be three or four hundred feet. From the limited supply of light from above, they are sombre and gloomy in their appearance, even when the sun is in the meridian. Some similar defile, associated with the super-added terrors of beasts of prey, ready to devour the feeble members of the flock, may have been before the shepherd-king of Israel, when he spoke of the trials and dangers of life, under the figure of a ‘valley of death-shade.’”\*

#### SALT, DESERTS.

In traversing the region between Egypt and Ghuzzeh, the Gaza of the Bible, my course, during most of the forenoon of the twenty-third of March, lay through a succession of basins or valleys, where the surface of the ground was moist, and covered with a thin incrustation of salt. It was so slippery here that the camels could with difficulty keep erect; one of them actually fell at full length, with a groan which it was piteous to hear. We were not far at this time from the Mediterranean, of which we had glimpses now and then. It is quite possible that a strong wind from the west causes the sea occasionally to overflow the entire tract, and, on its receding, the water left in the low places evaporates, and encrusts the earth with salt. There are other deserts, or parts of deserts, in the East, as travelers inform us, which have a similar peculiarity; though the salt may be formed in

\* *Lands of the Bible*, Vol. I., p. 320.

those cases in a different manner. Perhaps the most remarkable among these is the region south of the Dead Sea.

A soil of this nature must, of course, be unproductive ; nothing grows there, and the means of supporting life are wanting. It may be to this feature of an eastern desert, aggravating so much its other evils, and rendering it unfit to be the abode of men, that the prophet Jeremiah refers, when he says of the ungodly man, "He shall inhabit the parched places of the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited." (17, 6.)

The prophet himself may have traversed this very region through which I passed ; though, probably, at a later period than that of his uttering the declaration quoted above. He was one of the Jewish fugitives who repaired to Egypt after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. He appears to have ended his days in that country. No one can be where he knows that such men have been before him, and not feel that a new tie of interest has been formed between himself and them.

About this time we had a view on the right of the range of hills which the ancients called Mount Casius. On the left we saw between us and the Mediterranean an extensive pool of sea-water, which I suppose to have been the famous "Serbonian bog," believed to have been, from the treacherous nature of the ground, the occasion of so many disasters. It would seem that the wind, at times, drives the sand into this pond, converting it into a sort of morass. Milton has made both these names familiar to English ears :

“ A lake profound as that Serbonian bog  
Betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have sunk.”

But these and such other natural objects as occur on this line of travel have more than a classical interest, because along here lay the footsteps of the patriarchs, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and others, and, in all probability, of the parents of the Saviour at the time of the flight into Egypt. It is the shortest road between that country and Palestine, and the one, therefore, of which we are generally to think when we read in the Bible that persons went down into Egypt, or came up thence to the promised land. The distance from the vicinity of Cairo, where the Pharaohs lived and reigned, to Gaza, at the entrance into Judea, is about two hundred and fifty miles. The thought was ever with me, as a sort of personal presence, that, here and there where my tent was set up, some of those who are held forth as examples of the faith that we should follow, may have rested in their journeys, “built an altar, and called on the name of the Lord.” Hence, I have endeavored in the preceding sketches to present as many particulars as possible, in connection with the Scripture passages, that seemed adapted to assist the reader to understand what a person may see or experience on such a journey.

#### SHADOW OF A ROCK.

The simplest customs which illustrate the Bible have an interest, when seen in the home of the Bible, which none but the traveler, perhaps, can fully appreciate. I can hardly

describe the pleasure which I felt when I first saw a company of men and boys reclining at noonday "in the shadow of a rock." This happened as I was going from Jerusalem to Jericho — a region so wild and desolate that it might be called emphatically "a dreary land." See Isaiah 32, 2. In many places the want of trees renders the shelter of a rock the only refuge which a person can find from the scorching heat; and even when trees are at hand the rock affords the better protection, because it excludes so much more effectually the rays of the sun. After this first instance I became quite familiar with the sight in question. I was often glad myself, when fatigued with hard riding, and oppressed with heat, to dismount and rest for a while in the cooling shade of an overhanging rock. No one who has traveled in the Orient can fail to bear witness to the value of such a refuge, or to recollect with pleasure how often he has availed himself of it.



ARABS TRAVELING.

## CHAPTER II.

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

THE illustrations in this chapter are founded chiefly on the domestic, social and religious, usages of the East. The present inhabitants, it is true, are not, with a very inconsiderable exception, the Jewish race who occupied the country in the times of the Bible; but they belong to the same general stock; they have a similar form of civilization, and, in part, the same religious opinions and traditions; they follow the same occupations, agricultural and pastoral, and live under the same external or physical influences of climate and scenery, which control to so great an extent the habits of a people. We should expect, therefore, to find a marked resemblance between the modern and the ancient customs of the country, and to be able to gather up from this source important helps for enabling us to draw out in our minds a living picture of Jewish life in former ages. This presumption is both natural and accordant with the results of observation. The manner in which the existing customs of the East agree with those mentioned in the Scriptures shows, with demonstrative certainty, that they are the same, and have been stereotyped from age to age; that they represent

a similar style of manners, arts, domestic arrangements, and may be used with confidence for the purpose of clearing up obscurities in the Bible, and conducting us to a better insight into Hebrew antiquity.

Such examples of this agreement as I may be able to offer must be expected to lie very much on the surface; for a longer continuance abroad, and a closer association with the people, would be necessary to bring to light anything of very great novelty. Undoubtedly, after all that the industry of travelers and scholars has accomplished, much remains still to be done in this field of study. If a person possessed of the proper biblical information should devote himself to this particular object, and mingle with the natives, like Seetzen or Burckhardt, he would be able to perform a service for the cause of sacred learning, which would give him an honorable place among its promoters.

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#### SNOW FOR COOLING DRINKS.

At Damascus I found that snow, procured from the neighboring mountains of Anti-Lebanon, is kept for sale in the bazaars. The people are accustomed to mix it with water, with the juice of pomegranates, with sherbet and other drinks, for the sake of having a cooler beverage. I can testify that the use of such a mixture, in a hot day, is both agreeable and refreshing. "In the heat of the day," says Dr. Wilson,\* "the Jews at Hasbeia, in northern Galilee,

\* Lands of the Bible, Vol. II., p. 186.

offered us water cooled with snow from Jebel esh-Sheikh," the modern name of Mount Hermon.

In the valleys on the sides of Sannin, commonly reckoned the highest peak of Lebanon, snow remains during all the year. "Countless loads of it," says Dr. Schulz,\* "are brought down on the backs of mules to Beirut, and used there to freshen in some measure the water, otherwise hardly fit to drink." Nor is the use of the article confined, by any means, to the vicinity of the mountains where the snow falls. Volney † quotes an Arabic writer as saying that cargoes of snow, "obtained at Damascus, used, at one period, to be shipped at Beirut and Sidon for Damietta, where they were taken into boats and carried up the Nile to Cairo, to be lodged in cisterns for future use. Afterwards, the other mode of transportation having been discontinued, the snow was carried by land from Syria to Egypt; and so great was the traffic that hardly a day passed when a caravan was not despatched on this business." ‡

In this practice of the East, not unknown among the Greeks and Romans, of mingling snow with their drinks, we have an obvious explanation of a passage which has perplexed many a reader of the English Scriptures. I refer to Proverbs 25, 13: "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him; for

\* Jerusalem — Eine Vorlesung, p. 10 (1845).

† Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie, p. 262.

‡ During the winter that I was at Alexandria, ice was sold in the bazaars, imported from the vicinity of Boston.

he refresheth the soul of his master." The time of harvest varies somewhat in different parts of the holy land; but it falls generally within the months of April and May. The heat is then felt most oppressively, owing both to the season of the year and to the labor which the husbandman has to perform. The comparison, therefore, is a very expressive one. The prompt return of the messenger with good tidings, relieving the minds of those who are waiting in suspense, cheers and refreshes their spirits like a cooling draught in the heat of summer.

#### WHITED SEPULCHRES.

Among the novelties which engage the stranger's attention, on his arriving in Egypt and Syria, is the frequent appearance of the Welee, the name given to the tombs of those revered among the Mohammedans as great saints. The term signifies properly "a favorite of Heaven," but by an extension of meaning denotes also the place where persons of this class are buried. Most of the Welees are built over the graves of those to whom they are consecrated. A few of them, as Mr. Lane informs us,\* contain only some inconsiderable relic of those whose names they bear, while a few are mere cenotaphs. The Welee consists usually of a stone or brick edifice, with a dome or cupola over it, varying in height from eight to ten feet, and containing often a mat and a jar of water, for the convenience of such as may choose

\* *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I., p. 324 (1849).

to stop and perform their devotions. To adapt it to its use as a chapel still more perfectly, a slight recess or depression appears usually in the face of one of the interior walls (called the *Mihrab*), indicating the direction of Mecca, toward which the worshipper turns in offering his prayers. The Mohammedans build these tombs in honor of those who are held in repute for the supposed sanctity of their lives, and often bestow much labor and expense on them, for the purpose of adorning them and keeping them in repair. They stand commonly by the road-side, or on some eminence where they can be seen far and wide. Being covered with stucco or whitewashed, and occupying such conspicuous positions, they thrust themselves on the traveler's attention continually and everywhere.

It was a similar feeling, doubtless, which led the Jews to erect monuments in honor of their prophets and holy men, and to regard it, in like manner, as an act of merit both to build these monuments in the first instance, and afterward to garnish and preserve them from decay. In Matthew 23, 29. 30, the Saviour reproaches the scribes and Pharisees with their hypocrisy, inasmuch as they professed to honor the memory of the prophets in this ostentatious manner, while they cast practically so much contempt on their doctrines. "Woe unto you," he says, "because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, if we had lived in the time of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." Again, in Matthew 23, 27, he says, with

reference to the appearance of the tombs, as contrasted with the use to which they were applied : " Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead *men's* bones and of all uncleanness."

I may add that many of these Weeles or tombs in Palestine are still called after the names of the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament. I either saw or heard of tombs of this description consecrated to Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Ishmael, Joseph, Seth, Samuel, David, Jonah, Zechariah and others. The Jews share with the Mohammedans in their veneration for many of these sepulchres, and make pilgrimages to them as to holy places.

#### MODE OF CARRYING CHILDREN.

Women, both in Egypt and Syria, when abroad for recreation or traveling, place young children astride of their shoulders, and carry them in that way. It looks, to those not familiar with the sight, as if the poor things would tumble every moment from their lofty seat. Though left very much to take care of themselves, they contrive, by a dexterous use of their feet and by clinging to the heads of those who support them, to keep their place, even when tossed up and down on the back of a horse or camel. We have an allusion to this mode of carrying children in Isaiah 49, 22 : " They shall bring their sons in their arms ; and their daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." The sons are said to be carried in one way, and the daughters in

another, for the sake merely of varying the expression. Both modes were practised.

#### DIVAN.

Divan is the name given to the room, or part of a room, in an eastern house where the people sleep, sit, entertain their friends, or transact business. The apartment devoted to this use has a higher and a lower floor; it being necessary to pass from one to the other by an ascent more or less elevated. The lower floor, in the better houses, is paved often with rich mosaic, while the higher part, used for reclining, is spread with a mat or carpet, and furnished with bolsters, cushions, ottomans and the like, for the convenience of the company. In the poorer houses, there is little, aside from the raised floor or platform, to indicate the object of the room; the furniture consists merely of a common mattress or blanket.

I lodged a night in an Arab house at Seleh,\* on the moun-

\* This place has rarely been visited or even named by travelers. It was a mistake of the guide which caused us to stumble upon it. The following notice from my journal may not be amiss here. The house where we lodged was on the brow of a hill; the bulk of the town was further down the declivity. It lay on a tongue or projection of the mountain, stretching towards the south-west. A Wady on the east side swept around its southern extremity, into which fell another valley or ravine on the west side that came down from the north. The village consisted of some fifty houses, built of stone, one story high, all of them very neat and compactly arranged. Other heights, verdant with fruit-trees and with grain, stood around it on two sides. It appeared exceedingly picturesque as we descended to it, just as the shades of night

tains near Samaria, where I had the divan allotted to my use. The elevated seat extended across the room, plentifully supplied with blankets such as they were. In the course of the evening the villagers, with their sheikh or chief man among them, came to gaze at the strangers; they ascended the platform and sat down cross-legged on the part next to the side-wall; while, out of regard to our character as guests, my traveling companions and myself sat at the end of the room, held to be the more honorable place. At Damascus, I visited the houses of several wealthy Jews. The rooms in them fitted up with most splendor were the divans. The frescoed walls, the carpets, cushions, ottomans and similar appurtenances, gave to them an air of luxury oriental and gorgeous in the extreme. In one instance, at least, the seat for reclining was so much higher than the floor that it was necessary to mount to it by two or three steps.

In the language of the Bible, the terms couch, bed, canopy, divan, are not always distinguished clearly from each other. The divan is intended without doubt in 2 Kings 1, 4, where it is said to Ahaziah: "Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die." The ascent, in this case, would refer to the elevation of the divan above the floor. The inequality would be likely to be greater in a palace than in ordinary houses, because the arrangement was intended, no doubt, to mark the

were falling upon it. When we departed the next morning, a heavy mist hung over the place, and left but a dim outline of surrounding objects visible.

difference in rank between those waited on, and those who served; the latter being required to stand on the lower floor below their masters. The divan may be meant, also, in 2 Kings 21, 2, where it is said of Hezekiah that, as he lay in his bed, "he turned his face unto the wall and prayed unto the Lord." His object was to avoid the observation of those present while he prayed; and hence, reclining as he was at the time on his divan, which was contiguous to the wall, he naturally turned his face in that direction. The language of David, in Psalm 132, 4, "I will not go up unto my bed," may have the same reference.

#### THE PLACE OF HONOR.

The place of honor on the divan, as I have stated, is the corner, in distinction from the sides, of the room. "We were received into a long hall," says Mr. Bonar, speaking of his reception in a native family at Damietta, "with a stone floor, and a broad divan at the back end. In one corner, which is the place of state, we found the vice-consul, a smart-looking Egyptian, in a Greek dress of dark green, with yellow slippers. He received us very graciously and made us sit beside him on the divan."\*

The obscure passage in Amos 3, 12, receives illustration from this usage with respect to the dignity of the corner seat. "As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel be

\* Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, p. 66 (1852).

taken out that dwell in Samaria, in the corner of a bed (or divan), and on a couch of damask." I render the last clause in this way and differently from the English version because the original requires it. The meaning is, that, of the proud, self-indulgent inhabitants of Samaria, a miserable remnant only should escape the approaching destruction of the city, and these should be rescued only with the utmost difficulty and danger. A divan which I saw in the palace of the late Mahommed Ali, at Alexandria, furnishes an apt commentary on this verse. It was arranged after the oriental fashion, along the entire side of the room. It was capable of seating a great number of persons. A covering of the richest damask silk was spread over it, and hung in folds over the outward edge; while the magnificent cushions, adorned with threads of gold at the corners, distinguished those places above the others as the seats of special honor.

## STREETS OR BAZAARS.

The streets in eastern cities are generally distinguished from each other, not by the separate names which they bear, but by the sort of traffic or business carried on in them. The different branches of trade, instead of being intermixed as with us, are usually assigned to a distinct locality. Thus, at Cairo, the principal streets have a row of shops on each side of them; each of these streets, or a part of each, is devoted to a particular branch of commerce, and is known as "the market" of the article sold or manufactured there. Hence we hear of the market of the butchers, of the fruiterers, the

copper-ware sellers, the jewelers, and so on. The same thing is true of other places, as Damascus, Beirut, Constantinople, Smyrna. One of the most interesting sights that I saw at Damascus was the great bazaar of the Armenian jewelers, where the clank of the hammers and the blast of the furnaces reminded me of a factory in our own land. All those who follow this business have their work-stands under the same roof.

Here, too, we have a usage of the past perpetuated to the present time. Jerusalem was parceled out, in like manner, among its artisans and tradesmen. We read that Jeremiah, during his imprisonment by order of Zedekiah, received "daily a portion of bread out of the bakers' street." (Jeremiah 37, 21.) That a close connection existed between those of the same craft we learn incidentally from Nehemiah 3, 32. In rebuilding the holy city, after the exile, "the goldsmiths and the merchants" acted together in repairing a portion of the walls. Josephus calls the valley between Mount Zion and Mount Moriah the Tyropœon, that is, the valley of the cheese-mongers. He mentions also a street of the meat-dealers.

#### EASTERN MERCHANTS.

The passage in James 4, 13, derives its meaning in part from a mode of conducting business in the East which differs from the ordinary modes of traffic among us. Rebuking those who cherish the too confident hope of life, in their eager pursuit of wealth, the apostle says: "Go to now, ye that say,

To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow." This language intimates a different course, as the one to be adopted for amassing wealth, from that which our habits prescribe as conducive to success. A rambling life here is apt to be an unthrifty one. Instead of a temporary traffic here and there, with its petty gains, those who would rise to opulence among us are expected to have some business, which they pursue with constancy both as to time and place. This is the general rule. We have no such customs as make it natural to speak of going to a city and abiding there a year for the purpose of trade, and then wandering to another city, and still another, as descriptive of the course which men take in order to become rich.

The apostle's exhortation, on the contrary, reminded those to whom he wrote of a well-known fact in commercial life. They saw at once the pertinence of the illustration, though lost in a measure to us unless it be explained. Many of those who display their goods in the eastern bazaars are traveling merchants. They come from other cities, and after having disposed of their stock in trade, either for money or other commodities, proceed to another city, where they set up in business again. They supply themselves in every instance with the merchandise best suited to a particular market; and thus, after repeated peregrinations, if successful in their adventures, they acquire a competence, and return home to enjoy the fruits of it. The process, therefore, agrees pre-

cisely with the apostle's representation : the way to become rich was to go into this or that city, and sojourn for a while and trade, and then depart to another city.

#### THE RIGHTS OF HOSPITALITY.

A regard for the rights of hospitality still distinguishes the natives of the East. A stranger cast by any accident upon their kindness seldom has occasion to complain of cruelty or neglect ; he may expect, if he approaches them in a proper manner, to receive freely such civilities as their simple mode of life may enable them to extend to him. Having lost our way, after leaving Samaria at a late hour in the afternoon, and being overtaken by night, without our tents, which had been sent forward in another direction, we were obliged to seek shelter in an Arab village among the mountains. I inquired of the guide, when the necessity of this course was stated, whether we could expect a favorable reception, especially as it was a part of the country where foreigners are seldom seen. Of that he assured us we need have no doubt ; for every village, said he, has a house appropriated to the use of strangers ; an understanding exists that some particular family shall always be ready to receive them under their roof. We were not disappointed. On reaching the place, the guide inquired of the first man that we met, for the Menzel (the name of the stranger's house) ; the villager went forward at once and showed us the way thither. No hesitation or parleying ensued. The gate of the court was thrown open, we entered, were established in

the best room which the house afforded, and supplied with milk and bread, all that we asked for or needed. No compensation or present is expected in such cases.

Other travelers bear testimony to this trait of the oriental character. Dr. Shaw, who traveled so extensively in northern Africa and Asia, says: "In most of the inland towns and villages is a house set apart for the reception of strangers, with a proper officer to attend to them; there they are lodged and entertained, for one night, at the expense of the community."\* In the Hauran, east of the Jordan, says Mr. Elliott, † "a Syrian never thinks it necessary to carry with him on a journey any money for food or lodging, as he is sure to be supplied without it. Our money was sometimes refused, and never asked for; nor can there be a doubt that we should have been received and welcomed in almost every house of the Hauran." ‡

There is an incident in the life of the Saviour which connects itself with this usage. In one of his journeys to Jerusalem, in passing through Samaria, he sent messengers, towards the close of the day, no doubt, into a certain village to prepare a night's lodging; the people, offended because he was going to Jerusalem, whereas they held Gerizim to be the proper place of worship, refused to receive him. This treat-

\* Travels in Barbary and the Levant, Preface, p. xiii.

† Travels in the Three Great Empires, &c., Vol. II., p. 334.

‡ The right in question entitles the traveler to entertainment over night, but does not secure him from violence or robbery after having left the roof which sheltered him.

ment was not only an incivility, but a violation of the rights of hospitality. The Saviour and his friends, according to the recognized laws of oriental civilization, had a claim to be entertained in some house in that village. It was this view of the outrage, unquestionably, which excited such fierce indignation in two of the disciples, James and John. They asked if they should not command fire to come down from heaven and consume the inhospitable Samaritans. I must quote, also, the reply of him who spake as never man spake. "He turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." See Luke 9, 51, sq.

#### TAKING OFF THE SHOES.

Moses, when he saw the burning bush in which Jehovah appeared to him, was directed to put off his shoes from his feet, because the ground on which he stood was holy, (Exodus 3, 3, and Acts 7, 32, 33.) This mark of respect was regarded as due to a superior; since to appear before him, wearing shoes or sandals, was to be guilty of the indecorum of approaching him with the feet soiled with the dust which would otherwise cleave to them. On the same principle the Jewish priests officiated barefoot in the tabernacle and in the temple. The same custom, growing out of the same feeling, is observed among the eastern nations at the present day. The Arabs and Turks never enter the mosques without putting off their shoes. They exact a compliance with this rule

from foreigners who visit these sacred places. Though, within a period not very distant, the Mahommedans excluded Christians entirely from the mosques, they now allow them to enter some of them, provided they leave their shoes at the door, or exchange them for others which have not been defiled by common use.

A Samaritan from Nablus, who conducted Messrs. Robinson and Smith to the summit of Gerizim, when he came within a certain distance of the spot, took off his shoes, saying it was unlawful for his people to tread with shoes upon this ground, it being holy.\* The Mahommedans regard Jerusalem as one of their holy places; and for a long time they required Christians, who would enter the city, to do so with naked feet. Many of the eastern pilgrims do this, at present as a voluntary act. It happens not seldom that European travelers, borne away by their feelings at the moment, uncover their heads as they enter the gates.

#### HOUSES ON THE CITY WALLS.

In Acts 9, 24. 25, we read that the Jews at Damascus sought to kill Paul, and "watched the gates day and night" for that purpose; but "the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a basket." But in 2 Corinthians 11, 33, the apostle says, with reference to the same escape, that "he was let down in a basket through a window through the wall." Now, how do these different

\* Biblical Researches, Vol. III., p. 100.



expressions stand related to each other? The common view is that the house where Paul was secreted was built on the wall of the city, with a window projecting over it; and hence it could be said, according to Luke's narrative in the Acts, that Paul was "let down through the wall," without any reference to the house; or, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that he was "let down through a window through the wall." The house of Rahab, who concealed the Hebrew spies, is supposed to have been in such a situation, and to have had such a window. "Then she let them down by a cord through the window; for her house was upon the town-wall, and she dwelt upon the wall." (Joshua 2, 15.) See, also, the account of David's escape, in 1 Samuel 19, 12. I saw houses built on the walls, with overhanging windows, in several of the eastern cities.

It occurred to me to inquire of one of the American missionaries at Sidon what he thought of the point in question. We were standing at the time in the balcony of a window of the house which he occupied in that city. He inclined to assent to the common view, and added: "We have here before us an example of just such an arrangement. This house is contiguous to the city wall, and the floor where we stand is beyond the line of the wall; so that a person descending from this window would alight on the ground outside of the city."

Possibly another explanation may be the correct one. A few steps to the left of Bab-es-Shurkeh, the gate on the east side of Damascus, I observed two or three windows in the

external face of the wall, opening into houses on the inside of the city. If Saul was let down through such a window (which belongs equally to the house and the wall), it would be still more exact to interchange the two expressions; that is, we could say, as in the Acts, that he escaped "through the wall," or as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that he escaped "through a window through the wall."

#### USE OF BASKETS.

As I stood with a friend, who resided at Damascus, looking at the windows referred to above, a couple of men came to the top of the wall with a round, shallow basket, full of rubbish, which they emptied over the wall. "Such a basket," said my friend, "the people use here for almost every sort of thing. If they are digging a well, and wish to send a man down into it, they put him into such a basket; and that those who aided Paul's escape should have used a basket for the purpose, was entirely natural, according to the present customs of the country. Judging from what is done now, it is the only sort of vehicle of which men would be apt to think under such circumstances." Pilgrims are admitted into the monastery at Mount Sinai in a similar manner. A rope, with a basket attached to it, is let down from a window or door, about thirty feet above the ground. Those who are to ascend, seat themselves, one after another, in this basket, and are thus drawn up by means of a pulley or windlass turned by those in the convent.

## A CITY ON A HILL. /

The town of Safet, perched upon the highest point in Galilee, may be seen from a great distance in all the adjacent region. The Saviour delivered his Sermon on the Mount, in Galilee. Hence the oriental Christians say that he had Safet in view when he compared his disciples to "a city set on a hill." Some travelers in the East, as Stephens, Elliott and others, express the same belief, as if it were a matter well settled. But the supposition of such a reference is entirely improbable, first, because the expression would then naturally be, "the city set on a hill;" and, secondly, because such an illustration in that country would be apt to suggest itself from a more general fact. Villages in Palestine are usually situated on hills, and hence are conspicuous at a distance. I frequently counted six, eight or more of them in such places, all within sight at once. "City," as used in the English Scriptures, it may be superfluous to say, denotes hamlet, village, as well as a town of the larger class. Add to this, that the houses are often built of chalky lime-stone, or are whitewashed; and hence so much the more in that country "a city set on a hill cannot be hid." It will be seen, from this statement, how very expressive was the Saviour's illustration as addressed to those living in a hilly country where almost every summit glittered with a village.

## FLAT ROOFS.

The flat roofs of the houses give rise to various customs to which we have nothing analogous. At sun-down, when

the heat of the day is past, people promenade there for the sake of fresh air and exercise. Calling on an acquaintance at Jerusalem, near the close of the day, I was informed that the family were on the top of the house, and I was invited to join them there, where they were taking their evening walk. In the larger towns it is no uncommon spectacle, at particular seasons, to look up and see almost every house-top thronged more or less with persons moving to and fro, or reclining at their ease. Allusions to this practice occur in the Old Testament. In 2 Samuel 11, 2, it is said that "David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house." In Daniel 4, 30, we read that Nebuchadnezzar "walked on the palace of the kingdom of Babylon;" and that, as he stood there surveying the magnificence of the capital, he uttered the impious boast: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" He had gone to the roof probably for a different object; and it was the accidental sight of the city spread around him in its splendor, which filled his heart with pride, and led him to deny his dependence on God, instead of acknowledging him as the author of his prosperity. Our English version leaves out of view the connection between the occasion of the temptation, and the place where Nebuchadnezzar was standing at the moment. The margin of our Bibles suggests, correctly, that, instead of "in," we should read "on" the palace, in the account of this transaction.

The roof was used, also, as a place for conversation, and, at night, in the warm season, was often converted into a

substitute for a sleeping-room. It is related that Samuel, wishing for a private interview with Saul, "communed with him on the top of the house." It would appear that Saul, at least, slept there during the following night; for early the next morning, "Samuel called to Saul on the top of the house,\* saying, Up, that I may send thee away." (2 Samuel 9, 25. 26.) At the present day, when the nights are warm, the roof is regarded as the best place for sleeping which the house affords.

#### HIDING THE SPIES.

Another use to which the open space on the roof is applied is that of storing corn, figs, grapes and other fruit, placed there to ripen more fully, or to be dried. It is very convenient for that purpose, because the products, in such a situation, are exposed to the full glare of the sun, and are so comparatively safe from pillage. "At Deburich, at the base of Tabor," says Mr. Bartlett, "we established our bivouac at nightfall upon the roof of a house, amidst heaps of corn just gathered from the surrounding plain." †

This custom reaches back to the very beginnings of Bible history. The Canaanites, who occupied the country before the Hebrews, made use of the same facility for ripening their harvests. The case of Rahab who dwelt in Jericho, and who concealed the "two men" sent as spies from the Hebrew camp, shows the observance of the practice at that early age and

\* A slight change in the English version is required here.

† Footsteps of our Lord and his Apostles (Eng. 3d ed.), p. 199.

among the aboriginal inhabitants. "She brought them up," it is said, "to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of the flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof." (Joshua 2, 6.) She had placed the flax there to dry, and, in the emergency of the moment, took advantage of its being there, as the readiest way of concealing the men from their pursuers.

#### PRAYING ON THE HOUSE-TOP.

The roofs of the larger houses have usually a wall or balustrade around them, three or four feet high ; so that a person there, while he has a view of surrounding objects, does not expose himself necessarily to the observation of others. Without considering this fact, it might strike one that the apostle Peter hardly acted in the spirit of the Saviour's precept (Matthew 6, 6), in repairing to the house-top for the performance of his devotions. See Acts 10, 9, sq. The roof in this instance, however, may have had a protection like that mentioned above, and the apostle may have chosen this retreat because he could be secure there both from interruption and from public notice. Indeed, at Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, where Peter was residing at the time of his vision on the house-top, I observed houses, furnished with a wall around the roof, within which a person could sit or kneel, without any exposure to the view of others, whether on the adjacent houses or in the streets. At Jerusalem, I entered the house of a Jew early one morning, and found a member of the family, sitting secluded and alone on one of

the lower roofs, engaged in reading the Scriptures and offering his prayers.

The Mahommedans, it is true, make no scruple about performing their religious duties in public,—they desire rather than shun the observation of others; and we know that the Jews of old were ever prone to the same ostentation. But our Lord enjoined a different rule. His direction was: “When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”

#### DWELLING ON THE HOUSE-TOP.

On the roof of the house in which I lodged at Damascus were chambers and rooms along the side and at the corners of the open space or terrace, which constitutes often a sort of upper story. I observed the same thing in connection with other houses. At Deburieh, a little village at the foot of Mount Tabor, probably the Daberath of the Old Testament (Joshua 19, 12), I noticed small booths, made of the branches and leaves of trees, on some of the roofs. Peter exclaimed at the time of the transfiguration: “It is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles” or booths; “one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” (Matthew 17, 4.) As I was then approaching Tabor, the reputed (though I suppose not the actual) scene of that event, it was certainly striking, at least, as a coincidence with the subject of my thoughts at the moment, to see those booths in such a place.

Pococke, who spent a night at Tiberias, says : \* “ We supped on the top of the house, for coolness, according to their custom, and lodged there likewise, in a sort of closet about eight feet square, of wicker-work, plastered round toward the bottom, but without any door.” Such places, though very agreeable as a retreat from the sun in summer, and cooler than the interior of the house, would be very undesirable as a constant abode, especially in the rainy season and during the winter. Any rooms so exposed as those on the roof, and comparatively so narrow and confined, would be inferior to the lower and ordinary apartments of the house. To such places of retreat on the roof we may suppose the proverb to refer which says : “ Better to dwell in the corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house,” (Proverbs 21, 9.)

#### THE PLACE OF OBSERVATION.

I rode one afternoon with a company of friends to Anata, the Anathoth of Jeremiah 1, 1, four or five miles to the north-east of Jerusalem. This is now a paltry village of ten or twelve houses ; though some ruins discovered there indicate that it may have been once a more important place. It was a city of the Levites ; they spurned the prophet’s message, and called forth one of his severest predictions :

“ Thus saith Jehovah against the men of Anathoth,  
Who seek thy life and say :—  
‘ Prophesy not in the name of Jehovah,

\* Travels, Vol. II., p. 69 (1745).

And so shalt thou not die by our hand.'  
Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of hosts : —  
' Behold, I will punish them, —  
The young men shall die by the sword,  
Their sons and daughters shall die by hunger,  
And no remnant be left to them ;  
For I will bring evil on the men of Anathoth  
At the time when I punish them.' ”

The Assyrian conquest fulfilled this prophecy. Anathoth was then laid waste, and continued to be a heap of ruins until the return from the exile, when it was rebuilt. See Jeremiah 32, 7, sq., compared with Ezra 2, 23.

Our arrival excited some interest in the little hamlet. The villagers, men and women, soon showed themselves on the tops of the houses, where they could observe us and our movements to better advantage. In the larger towns the houses, especially of the better class, have windows which look toward the street, though guarded usually by close lattice work, as well as windows which look into the court, and are more open. In the common villages the houses, as a general thing, have windows only of the latter description. Hence the inmates, in order to obtain a view of anything taking place at a distance or on the outside of their habitations, find it convenient to repair to the roofs for that purpose. This fact throws light on Isaiah 22, 1. The prophet, when he would represent the people of Jerusalem as alarmed by the apprehension of an approaching enemy, describes them as hastening to the house-tops and looking forth anxiously to descry the approach of

the invaders. How unintelligible, without a knowledge of that custom, would be the prophet's abrupt exclamation addressed to the city: "What aileth thee now, that thou art — all (of thee) — gone up to the house-tops?" See, also, Isaiah 15, 3.

## USE OF BELLS.

It is very common to see bells attached to the necks of mules, horses and camels, when the animals are at pasture or traveling. The object is to incite them to a more lively movement; while, at the same time, the bell serves as a signal for keeping those who journey together from becoming separated, or enabling them, if that should happen, to regain their course. This familiar practice suggests the expression in Zechariah 14, 20: "In that day shall there be (inscribed) on the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord." The prophet foresees the introduction of a new type of piety among men; none of their possessions, when that better age has come, are to be kept back from the service of God; they shall carry the spirit of religion into all the concerns and relations of life.

## GRINDING AT THE MILL.

It is a little remarkable that although the practice of grinding corn by a hand-mill, to which the sacred writers so often allude, is still very common in Syria, I yet witnessed but one instance of it. This was at Jenin, on the border of the plain of Esdraelon. In the court of one of the houses of this village I saw two young women sitting on the ground, engaged in this mode of grinding. The mill consisted of two stones,

the upper one circular, the lower one partly so, with a projection on one side, two or three inches long, slanting downward, and scooped out so as to carry off the meal. The lower stone had an iron pivot (I think it was) extending from its centre through a hole in the centre of the upper stone. An upright handle was fixed in a socket near the edge of the upper stone, and both the women, taking hold of this handle, whirled the stone round and round with great rapidity. One of them every now and then dropped a handful of grain into the hole at the centre of the upper stone. Perceiving my curiosity, they stopped the motion of the mill, and, taking off the upper stone from the lower, afforded me a view of the inside. I found that the surface of the stones where they came in contact was very rough, marked with indentations for the purpose of crushing the grain more effectually. At an earlier stage of my journey, at Pompeii in Italy, I had seen a pair of mill-stones, entirely similar to these in the East. They were in the house known among the ruins there as the house of the baker, occupying, in all probability, the very spot where they stood on the day when the eruption of Vesuvius buried up that ill-fated city.

The labor of grinding at such mills is still performed for the most part by females, as is implied in the Saviour's declaration: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left." It was impossible to look at two persons sitting like those females by the side of each other, and engaged in the same occupation, without feeling how forcibly that language must have conveyed to

Christ's hearers the intended idea of the suddenness of the destruction which was about to burst on Judea, and of the difficulty and uncertainty, in the case of each individual, of his effecting his escape from it.



SONG OF THE GRINDERS.

The time of grinding is regulated by the wants of the family; hence, though it may occur at other times, it takes place usually at early dawn, in preparation for the morning meal, and, for a similar reason, at the close of day. I was saying, in the house of a resident at Jerusalem, that I was disappointed in not having seen, as yet, the eastern mill in use. "If you will come here at sun-down," he replied, "you can satisfy that desire; you will see and hear the women grinding all around us." His house was on the hill Bezetha, where the unoccupied ground allows the people to come abroad and perform such labor in the open air.

The operation of grinding is attended not only with the

noise occasioned by the grating of the stones, but often by that of the singing, or, as we might call it quite as properly, the shrieking of the women who grind. Various travelers testify to the fact of its being common for them to accompany their occupation with a song. Hence, as the recurrence of the noise of the hand-mill at the proper hours is one of the characteristics of an inhabited, flourishing village; so, on the contrary, the cessation of this noise is mentioned in the Scriptures as one of the things which mark most impressively the solitude of a place given up to desertion and ruin. Thus, in Jeremiah 25, 10, 11, God threatens to take from the Jews

“ The voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness,  
The voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride,  
The sound of the mill-stones, and the light of the candle :  
And the whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment.”

The writer of the Apocalypse (18, 22) announces the fall of the mystical Babylon in similar terms: “The voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee.”

#### STATUTE OF MOSES.

It is evident that no family could well dispense with so necessary an article as the mill-stone. If deprived of this, they would be put to the greatest inconvenience in preparing their daily food. Hence we see the humanity of the Hebrew

lawgiver, who enacted that "no man should take the upper or nether mill-stone as a pledge; for he taketh a man's life in pledge." (Deuteronomy 24, 6.)

#### DROWNING IN THE SEA.

The common mill-stone rarely exceeds two feet in diameter, and hence its size fitted it to be used as an instrument of punishment. It was sometimes fastened to the necks of criminals who were to be drowned. To this use of it the passage (Mark 9, 42) alludes, which says: Sooner than "offend one of these little ones, it were better for a man that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." See also Matthew 18, 6; and Luke 17, 2. It is said that this mode of execution has not become obsolete in the East.

#### BEHIND THE MILL.

As those who grind have the mill before them, it becomes natural, in describing their position with reference to the mill, to speak of their being behind it. This explains the otherwise singular expression in Exodus 11, 5. It is said there that the pestilence which was to be sent on the Egyptians should "destroy from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill."

#### SAMSON'S PUNISHMENT.

It is said, in Judges 16, 21, that the Philistines "put out the eyes of Samson, and made him grind in the prison-

house ;" that is, he was confined in prison, and required to grind there, by turning a hand-mill, such as I have described above. A more degrading labor could not have been imposed on him ; and it was chosen for that very reason. He who had been the hero of Israel, who had possessed the strength of a giant, was compelled to sit on the ground and grind corn, for his insulting foes, like a woman or a slave. Some persons entertain the grotesque idea that Samson was put into a harness, like a horse, and made to grind in some sort of a tread-mill.

#### SHUTTING THE GATES.

In returning from an excursion to Neby Samuil, the Mizpah of Scripture, two hours north of Jerusalem, the day proved to be well-nigh spent. We had consumed more time than we had supposed, and were obliged to ride as rapidly as the rugged path would allow ; for the gates of Jerusalem are closed punctually at sun-down (except one of them, which remains open half an hour later), and we were in danger, consequently, of arriving too late to be admitted. This practice of shutting the gates is not peculiar, of course, to Jerusalem, or to eastern cities, and is not mentioned as anything novel ; but it was not without its interest, surely, to be reminded of the existence of the custom, under just such circumstances. It was adapted to call to mind the application of the fact which the apostle John has made in his description of the heavenly Jerusalem : "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it ; for the glory of

God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day ; for there shall be no night there." (Revelation 21, 23. 25.)

#### USE OF PERSONAL NAMES.

The simplicity in the mode of naming individuals, which prevailed among the Hebrews, is practised still. Thus we read in the Scriptures, of Abraham, Jacob, David, Peter, James, Paul, without any additional name, except in certain cases where an obvious reason existed for a fuller mode of designation. The name of the father was sometimes added for the sake of effect, as Simon son of Joses ; or an epithet was employed, as Simon Zelotes, Judas Iscariot, when two or more persons moved in the same circle, and were in danger of being mistaken for one another. But, with a few exceptional deviations of this nature, men were wont to be known in common life under a single name, the Christian name, as we should call it, in distinction from that of the family.

The old usage remains at the present day ; and not only so, but the names employed with most frequency are the ancient historic names of the Bible. In the caravan with which I traveled from Egypt to Palestine were fourteen men who were natives of the country. Among them we had an Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Solomon and Job. We addressed them, and they addressed each other, in the true patriarchal style, by these familiar appellations. This use of single names, and this partiality for the names which the Old or the New Testament has rendered famous, we find existing

not only among the Jews, but the Arabs and the Christian inhabitants of the East, as Copts, Armenians, Greeks and others.

The habit of hearing such names used continually in the lands where they originated, and where the actions were performed which they suggest to the mind, tends powerfully to weaken one's impression of the remoteness of time, and to bring the past and present near to each other. It contributes to the same feeling to journey from place to place, and see the ruins or sites of so many ancient towns, and to hear the people speaking, from day to day, of Jerusalem, and Hebron, and Joppa, and Bethlehem, and Nazareth, from which the traveler perhaps has just come, or to which he inquires the way.

I am conscious that these and similar causes have wrought a great change in my own feelings, at least, on this subject. The days when Christ walked on the earth ; when Peter, and John, and the other disciples traveled with him over the mountains and plains of Palestine ; nay, when Abraham, and Lot, and the other patriarchs, pitched their tents at Hebron, and Bethel, and Shechem, seem by no means so remote as they once did. The intervening period of time has become narrower. It appears but comparatively a short time since such persons lived in the world, and performed the deeds which we connect with their names.

#### A CONTINUAL DROPPING.

On the roofs of many of the houses, especially in northern Syria, I noticed a cylindrical rolling-stone, the object of

which, as I was told, was to smooth and harden the mud-covered roofs. This operation is necessary as a means of keeping out the rain; since otherwise the mud and gravel, which cover the poorer houses, would crack and allow the water to trickle through the crevices upon the heads of the inmates. It is customary to apply the roller especially after a shower, because the clay, being then softened, may be reduced more easily to a solid mass.

Notwithstanding this precaution, and still more in case of its being omitted, it is found to be very difficult to exclude the wet entirely from such imperfect habitations. The more violent, protracted rains are liable to loosen the earth which forms the roof and to open a passage for the water to flow or drop, according to the extent of the injury, into the interior of the house.

Though it may not be entirely certain, it is yet probable that the comparison in Proverbs 27, 15, is derived from this liability of the Syrian villagers to suffer such an invasion of their domestic comfort. "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike;" that is, they are equally intolerable, and drive a man out of the house; or, if he remains, render his situation exceedingly unpleasant. As an illustration of this, Mr. Hartley, who traveled in Asia Minor, relates the following incident: "Last night," he says, "we retired to rest in what appeared to be one of the best rooms which we have occupied during the journey; but at midnight we were roused by the rain descending through the roof; and were obliged to rise and seek shelter from

the incessant dropping, in the corridor, which was better protected." \*

Pertinent here, also, is what Lepsius, † the Egyptologer, mentions as having happened to himself on one occasion. Being overtaken by a sudden shower at night, near Deir El-Kamar, on Mount Lebanon, he took refuge in a common house of the country. He attempted to sleep; but ere long the continued rain softened the mud on the roof, and began to pour down on his bed. The family, out of pity to him, sent out one of their number to fill up the chinks and draw about the stone roller. But now, besides the rain, heaps of stone and dirt came tumbling on him, so that bad was made worse; he was compelled to beg them to forego the well-meant kindness. He had no sleep that night, and hailed the earliest dawn as the signal for departing.

The authors of the Septuagint version evidently understood the passage under remark as alluding to this species of annoyance. They translate, "Drops of rain in a wintry day drive a man out of his house; in the same manner, also, does an abusive woman." Many of the commentators recognize this as the origin of the illustration in the proverb.

#### SALE OF SPARROWS.

The sparrows which flutter and twitter about dilapidated buildings at Jerusalem, and crevices of the city walls, are

\* Cited in *Scripture Manners and Customs*, one of the publications of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

† *Briefe aus Ägypten, Äthiopien, &c.* (1852), p. 393.

very numerous. In some of the more lonely streets they are so noisy as almost to overpower every other sound. As I heard their chirping around me and above me, I could not help thinking of the Hebrew term (*tsippor*), which designates that class of birds; the resemblance here between name and object was very striking. It may be taken for granted that they are not less numerous in other places where they have similar means for obtaining shelter and building their nests.

A person who resided in the country told me that these birds are sometimes caught or killed, and brought to market, in order to be sold as food. Being so small and so abundant, their value singly must of course be trifling; and hence, as the custom of selling them was an ancient one, we see how pertinent was the Saviour's illustration for showing how minutely God watches over all events, and how entirely his people may rely on his care and goodness. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10, 29—31.)

The sparrows, in their resort to houses and other such places, appear to be a privileged bird. They are not timid; they frequent boldly the haunts of men. Again and again was I reminded of the passage in the Psalms (84, 3), where the pious Israelite, debarred from the privileges of the sanctuary, envies the lot of the birds, so much more favored than he.

“ Even the sparrow finds a house,  
And the swallow has a nest,  
Where she lays her young,  
Near thy altars, Jehovah of hosts,  
My King, and my God.”

The altars are those for burnt offerings and for incense, and inasmuch as so many of the holiest rites were performed there, may be put in this passage by way of dignity for the entire temple. We cannot suppose that birds would be allowed to build on the altars themselves, or could build there on account of the use made of them. At the present day they may be seen hovering about the cupola and other parts of the Mosque of Omar, which occupies the ground where the temple of Solomon stood.

The Psalmist (102, 8) makes another beautiful allusion to the habits of the sparrow :

“ I watch, and am as a bird  
Solitary upon the roof.”

The meaning is, that, like a bird deprived of its mate and its young, so is he helpless and forsaken of all the world ; or as such a lonely bird chirps plaintively on the house-top, so he complains and mourns.

#### WELLS.

A passage occurs in Genesis 24, 11, sq., which groups together several particulars that make up an oriental scene entirely unique. The age is that of the patriarchs ; the actors are Elcazer, Abraham's servant, and Rebekah, the des-

tined bride of Isaac; the place is a well or tank in Mesopotamia, outside of the city; the time, nightfall. "And he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And, behold, Rebekah came out, with her pitcher upon her shoulder; and she went down to the well and filled her pitcher, and came up." A modern guide-book could hardly furnish a truer picture of what occurs at the close of every day, in the vicinity of eastern villages, than this description, written so many thousand years ago. The wells, at present, exist almost universally just out of the town; those who draw the water are women; they perform this office at other hours indeed, but especially at evening; they carry their pitchers upon their heads or shoulders; and often, though this depends on the construction of the tanks or fountains, which is not always the same, they have to go down a flight of steps, in order to reach the water. How vividly depicted in my mind are the scenes embodying these traits of oriental life, which I associate with Yebna, Ramleh, Bireh, Beitin, Lebonah, Nazareth, Kana, and other places still!

The task of fetching water for domestic uses is performed almost wholly by females. I recollect but two instances in which I saw "a man bearing a pitcher of water;" and I think that the manner in which the Saviour refers to such a circumstance (he mentions it as a sign) implies that it was not common. Morning and evening are the times when they resort to the wells most frequently; and at such seasons they

may be seen flocking thither, if the village be one of any size, in great numbers, carrying with them their skin bottles, or their pitchers and jars, which, having filled with water, they place on their shoulders, and in merry groups return to their homes. The tank at Ramleh, in the plain of Sharon, like the well to which Rebekah descended, has a flight of steps at one corner. The upper pool of Gihon, on the west of Jerusalem, has a similar descent at the south-east and south-west corners. The reservoir, supplied from the well of En-Rogel, near where the valley of Hinnom falls into that of Jehoshaphat, has steps at the north-west corner. So, too, the Fountain of the Virgin, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, lies in the bosom of a deep rock; and the visitor has to descend two series of steps before he comes to the level of the water. I frequently saw women come to this place, "go down to the well," fill their bottles, and bear them away on their heads or shoulders.

#### MODE OF DRAWING.

Sometimes a well-sweep, or windlass, is used for raising the water; but more commonly it is done by means of a rope fastened to the neck of the jar or bottle. The woman at the well of Samaria refers to some such contrivance when she says that "the well was deep, and there was nothing to draw with." (John 4, 11.) The curb-stones are often indented with deep marks worn by the friction of the ropes employed in raising water.

## WATERING OF FLOCKS.

It is a familiar sight still to see a flock of sheep, or several flocks, crouching at a watering-place; as it was in the days when Jacob "looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo! there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks." (Genesis 29, 2.) It is added, that "a great stone was upon the well's mouth." This precaution is necessary, especially in certain places where the wind would otherwise blow the sand into the well and fill it up. In approaching the ancient Sychar, I passed a well, the mouth of which was stopped with a stone so large that the united strength of two men would be required to move it. The daughters of Laban speak of the size of the stone on the well's mouth (Genesis 29, 8), as a reason why they could not water their flocks without assistance.

In Genesis 30, 38, "troughs" are mentioned, from which the sheep and cattle were accustomed to drink. I seldom saw a well, in the open country, that was not furnished with this needful apparatus. In some instances the trough was a long stone block hollowed out, from which a number of animals could drink at once; in other instances the troughs were smaller, several of them lying about the same well, from which one animal only could drink at a time.

## FOUNTAIN AT NAZARETH.

Among the places of traditionary interest at Nazareth, there was no one which I felt more disposed to regard with

vation, than a fountain just out of the village. It is called the Fountain of the Virgin, from its being supposed that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was accustomed to go thither for water, as is the practice of the women of Nazareth at the present day. Certainly, as Dr. Clarke, the traveler, observes, "if there be a spot throughout the holy land that was undoubtedly honored by her presence, we may consider this to have been the place; because the situation of a copious spring is not liable to change, and because the custom of repairing thither to draw water has been continued among the female inhabitants of Nazareth from the earliest period of its history."\* I always found here, at whatever hour I passed that way, a collection of women filling their pitchers with water. The well-worn path which leads out thither from the town, and which has been trodden by the feet of so many generations, presented always a busy scene, from the number of those, hurrying to and fro, engaged in this labor of water-carrying.

#### WELL IN A COURT.

In 2 Samuel 17, 18, 19, it is said that a man at Bahurim, a village on the Mount of Olives, "had a well in his court," where he concealed Jonathan and Ahimaaz from the servants of Absalom who were in pursuit of them. The court was that of his house, and the well, as Thenius† remarks on the passage, must have been a "waterless cistern." The Hebrew

\* Travels, &c., Vol. II., p. 427 (1812).

† Die Bücher Samuels, erklärt von Otto Thenius.

word denotes such a well, rather than a living fountain, while the place, also, where it was found, speaks for that view.

The present customs of the country confirm this statement. The house at Jerusalem in which I resided had a court, where was a well, or reservoir, from which the family obtained the water needed for domestic uses. Another house there, occupied by an American family, had three cisterns in the court, so arranged that when one is full the water flows into another. All the houses, indeed, of the better class are furnished with such reservoirs. Out of the city, on the north side especially, are the ruins of numerous ancient houses, the cisterns of which still remain in a state of excellent preservation. Nothing could more easily happen, than that one of these wells, in consequence of a deficiency in the supply of water during the rainy season, or of some defect in the construction, should become dry, and it would then answer as a place of retreat, such as David's friends found in the "man's house in Bahurim." In that instance, too, that they might divert suspicion from the spot, they "took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known."

#### DIGGING THROUGH HOUSES.

Burglary, or house-breaking, was accomplished among the Hebrews by a different process from that known to us. The proper term for describing that class of criminals among them would be, not house-breakers, but house-diggers. The easiest way for them to obtain clandestine access to houses,

as they were built in the common villages, was not to force the door or pick the lock, but to remove the cement or stones of the walls, and effect an entrance in that manner. In Egypt, and most of the towns of Palestine, at the present time, the houses are built, not of wood or stone, as we build them, but of mud, more or less hardened by exposure to the sun, or of mud and pebbles mixed together. This material may be, and sometimes is, so prepared as to be hard and durable; but more commonly it is put together superficially, and is then brittle, crumbles easily, and offers but little resistance to the elements of nature or the hand of violence. In passing through Egypt, we came one day to the site of a deserted village; the houses, constructed of this frail material, had fallen into heaps of rubbish; a solitary mosque overlooked the mouldering ruins, but hardly a single habitation continued to be occupied. At Damascus, which presents so brilliant an appearance as seen from the heights of Anti-Lebanon, the houses, on coming nearer, are found to be shabby and perishable. Many of them are built, not of fire-burnt bricks, but lumps of clay dried by the heat of the sun. One traveler says, that the rains of a certain winter injured greatly not less than three thousand of these houses, and entirely ruined six hundred of them.\* In summer they are liable to crack and crumble, and, when the wind blows, fill the air with clouds of dust.

It is obvious that the labor of digging through such walls cannot be difficult. Those who wished to plunder a house

\* Elliott's Travels, &c., Vol. II., p. 287.

would be apt to select a place where the partition was apparently thin, and then stealthily remove the stones or clay, so as to open a passage. Hence we see Job's meaning (24, 16) when he says of such malefactors: "In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time." In some parts of our English version "breaking through" should be changed to "digging through." Thus, in Matthew 24, 14, we should read: "If the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be dug through." So in Matthew 6, 19: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where thieves dig through and steal." Job's illustration of the frailty of human life is drawn probably from the idea of such decaying habitations. Mortal men "dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust." (Job 4, 19.)

#### ORDINARY DRESS AND FOOD.

John, the herald of Christ, after the example of Elijah his prototype, adopted a dress suited to render his preaching more effective. His appearance was stern, like the character of his warnings, his requisitions. See Matthew 3, 4, and Mark 1, 10. We are not to suppose, however, that his habits were altogether novel, that they had no resemblance to those of his countrymen; they were simple in the highest degree. — partook of the poverty and hardship of the lower mass of people, as became one who was to reform a luxurious, corrupt age.

The peculiarities in his mode of life have their counterpart in the present habits of the same class. The coat or mantle of camel's hair is seen still on the shoulders of the Arab who escorts the traveler through the desert, or of the shepherd who tends his flocks on the hills of Judea, or in the valley of the Jordan. It is made of the thin, coarse hair of the camel, and not of the fine hair, which is manufactured into a species of rich cloth. I was told that both kinds of raiment are made on a large scale at Nablus, the ancient Shechem. The "leathern girdle" may be seen around the body of the common laborer, when fully dressed, almost anywhere; whereas men of wealth take special pride in displaying a rich sash of silk or some other costly fabric.

The "wild honey," on which John subsisted in part, was no doubt the honey of wild bees, and not a sweet gum, known under the same designation, which flows from certain trees in the East. It is doubtful whether the trees which produce "honey," so called, ever grew in Palestine, though they are said to be very common in Arabia. On the contrary, bees abound there still, not only wild, but hived, as with us. I saw a great number of hives in the old castle near the Pools of Solomon; several, also, at Deburieh, at the foot of Tabor; and again, at Mejdell, the Magdala of the New Testament, on the Lake of Tiberias. Maundrell\* says that he saw "bees very industrious about the blossoms" between Jericho and the Dead Sea, which must have been within the limits of the very "desert" in which John "did eat locusts and wild

\* Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem (1749), p. 86.

honey." As to the locusts, it is well known that the poorer class of people eat them, cooked or raw, in all the eastern countries where they are found.

#### PURSE AND SCRIP.

As I was one day examining the tombs on the western side of the Mount of Olives, a peasant offered his services as a guide whose costume arrested my attention. He wore a girdle around his waist, which had an opening at one end, fitting it to hold money and other valuables, and at the same time carried a pouch or bag in which he could store away provisions and other things needed on a journey. Here, beyond doubt, I saw the articles to which the Saviour refers where he speaks of the "purse and scrip" which wayfarers were accustomed to take with them as a part of their traveling equipment. See Mark 6, 8, and Luke 22, 35.

#### BURIAL PLACES.

The sepulchres of the Hebrews were very different from those to which the dead are consigned among us. They were generally cut out of the solid rock; sometimes below the level of the ground, but oftener above the ground, and on the sides of mountains. The natural caves, with which the country abounds, were also used for this purpose. The allusions in the Bible to such tombs are very numerous. Abraham "buried Sarah his wife in the cave of Machpelah," (Genesis 49, 29.) The language of Isaiah (22, 16) brings before us a characteristic scene in the life of the Hebrews.

The prophet comes with a message to Shebna, one of the officers of the king, and accosts him thus : " What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hewest out for thyself a sepulchre, digging thy tomb on high, making it in the rock?" He finds the royal minister, at the moment of his visit, preparing a family tomb. The incident at Bethel affords a proof of the same custom. " And as the king turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres and burned them," (2 Kings 23, 16.) They were the remains of the old idolaters who had worshipped the golden calf which Jeroboam set up at Bethel. Josiah, in his zeal for the pure worship of Jehovah, ordered their bones to be dug up and burned. It illustrates the accuracy of Scripture that sepulchres are seen at the present day in the rocky heights around Bethel.\*

The grave of Lazarus was, no doubt, a tomb of this description. The Evangelist records that Joseph "took the body of the Saviour down from the cross, and wrapped him in linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre," (Mark 15, 46.)

It is a mournful sight to the traveler to look up, as he passes along the base of the mountains, in all parts of Palestine, and see the mouths of sepulchres, once crowded with the dead, but now tenantless, gaping down upon him. The rocks on the south side of the valley of Hinnom are full

\* See Sinai und Golgatha, von F. A. Strauss, p. 371.

of such apertures. The western side of the Mount of Olives contains many excavations, where formerly the dead were buried. It took me the greater part of two days to inspect but slightly the rock tombs in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. The little village of Silwan, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the east of the city, stands on the ground of an ancient cemetery. The inhabitants live, in part, in recesses dug out of the rocks, where the dead of former ages have mouldered back to dust. Near Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee, I noticed that the adjacent hills were perforated with such receptacles. Every one knows that Petra, the ancient capital of Edom, is visited with wonder, on account of the numerous, and in some instances splendid, structures, for the dead, built in the cliffs overhanging and surrounding that celebrated place. The deep gorge, where the Barrada forces its way through the Anti-Lebanon mountains in its progress to the plain of Damascus,\* I found to be remarkable, in this respect, beyond all expectation. The lofty walls of rock on both sides, in some places almost perpendicular, displayed numerous openings which lead to catacombs in the mountains. Some of the tombs are at such a point of elevation that it seems a wonder how they could ever have been approached. The road along the Mediterranean, north of Akka, carries the traveler past many such graves hewn in the rocks on the western slope of the hills which overlook the sea. Some of them are as old, no doubt, as the time when Tyre and Sidon flourished in their glory.

\* Near the site of Abila, the capital of Abilene (Luke 3, 1).

## A TOMB AT NAZARETH.

At the bottom of a ledge in the rear of the Maronite church, at Nazareth, I noticed a sepulchre cut in the rock, which excited my interest the more, because it had a large stone rolled against the mouth of it, and because it was apparently new, and still occupied. It came nearer, in its exterior, to my ideal of the tombs mentioned in the New Testament, than any which I had seen elsewhere. The grave of Lazarus was closed with a stone. The one in which the Saviour was laid was closed in that manner; and because the stone was heavy, the women, who were the first to go to the sepulchre, were perplexed to know how they should procure its removal. On the contrary, most of the tombs which I examined near Jerusalem must have had doors. The grooves and perforations for the hinges, that still remain, show that they were furnished with that convenience. It is possible that the tomb used in the case of the Saviour, which is said to have been new, was not entirely finished, and the placing of the stone at the entrance may have been a temporary expedient.

## AN ASYLUM.

At the present time, the people of the East bury, for the most part, in graves dug in the earth; so that the rock tombs are seldom used for their original purpose. Their size, since they are as large often as a commodious room, and their situation near the traveled paths, cause them to be resorted to as places of shelter for the night. During the

winter season, the wandering Arabs sometimes take up their permanent abode in them. Expressions in the Bible show that some of these tombs were applied to such a use at a very early period. Isaiah (65, 4) speaks of a people "that remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments." We learn from the Evangelists that insane persons, fugitives or outcasts from society, lodged in deserted tombs among the mountains. Thus, as the Saviour on one occasion crossed the Lake of Galilee to the country of the Gadarenes, "two men met him, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no one could safely pass that way," (Matthew 8, 28.) The present Um Keis has been identified as the ancient Gadara. Near there Burckhardt\* reports that he found many sepulchres in the rocks, showing how naturally the conditions of the narrative respecting the demoniacs could have been fulfilled in that region. Reliable writers state that they have seen lunatics occupying such abodes of corruption and death.

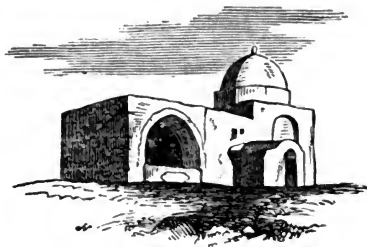
#### RACHEL'S TOMB.

At the distance of some twenty minutes from Bethlehem, on the way to Jerusalem, is the reputed sepulchre of Rachel, the wife of Jacob. It stands a few rods to the left of the direct path. The present monument is an unpretending Turkish mosque, with a dome of moderate elevation at one end. If this edifice does not mark the precise spot where Rachel lies buried (about which there may be some question), it must, at all events, stand not far from the place to which

\* *Reisen in Syrien*, Vol. I., p. 427.

that distinction belongs. The biblical account states that Jacob and his family "journeyed from Bethel, and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath. And Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave, that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day," (Genesis 35, 16—20; 48, 7.)

The Jews, as would be expected, regard the spot with peculiar interest. One of them filled a bag with earth collected near the tomb, and gave it to one of my traveling companions to bring home with him to this country, as a present to a brother of the Jew residing here. So true is it, in a literal sense, if not yet spiritually, that the sons of Israel, wherever they wander, favor the stones of Zion, and take pleasure in the dust thereof. The Jews often resort to this tomb to pray and read the history of the founders of their nation.



RACHAEL'S SEPULCHRE.

STONE HEAPS.

The people in the East express their abhorrence of the memory of an infamous person by throwing stones at the place where he died, or was buried, or where he committed

some crime. These stones become so numerous, in the course of time, as to form large heaps. An individual who had resided for some years in the country, who accompanied me from Bethlehem to Hebron, called my attention to certain stone heaps on the way, which, from their peculiar appearance, I judged to have had such an origin. In the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the east of Jerusalem, is a tomb, said to be the "pillar," or monument, which Absalom "reared for himself in the king's dale, to keep his name in remembrance," (2 Samuel 18, 18.) It is not uncommon to see Mohammedans, and especially Jews, stop as they pass here, pick up a stone and throw it at the tomb, as a testimony against Absalom's unnatural conduct in rebelling against his father. On the road between Tyre and Sidon Mr. Bonar noticed a *cairn* or heap of stones raised over the body of a slave who had been executed on that spot for plundering and murdering passengers. He was told that it is customary for travelers to add a stone to the heap as they pass.\* Dr. Shaw speaks of having found such heaps common not only in the holy land, but in Arabia and Barbary.† He says that they occur in places where men have been murdered, as well as where those guilty of murder, or otherwise infamous, are buried.

A usage like this may be traced back to very early times. A knowledge of the sin and doom of Achan was perpetuated in this way. "And all Israel stoned him with stones and

\* Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews, p. 318 (1852).

† Travels in Barbary and the Levant, Vol. I., Preface, xviii.

burned him with fire; — and they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day," (Joshua 7, 25.) The King of Ai had a similar sepulchre. "As soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down from the tree" (where he had been hanged) "and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day," (Joshua 8, 29.) We read, also, that "they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him; and all Israel fled every one to his tent," (2 Samuel 18, 17.) In these instances the stones heaped together at the outset were increased, no doubt, according to the still existing custom, by the gradual accumulation of other stones, which passers-by added to them.

#### AN EASTERN BED.

In returning to Jerusalem from an expedition to the Dead Sea, I lodged a night in the convent of Mar Saba, so romantically situated on the banks of the water-course of the Kidron. The bed provided for me consisted merely of a bolster and a blanket spread on the floor. The latter could be drawn partially over the body if any one wished, though the expectation seemed to be that we should sleep in our ordinary dress, without any additional covering. Such a bed is, obviously, a portable one; it is easy to take it up, fold it together, and carry it from place to place, as convenience may require.

The allusions in the Bible show that the couches or beds

in use among the Jews were of different kinds; that they were more or less simple, more or less expensive, according to the rank and circumstances of different persons. Anciently, however, as at the present time in the East, the common people slept on a light mattress or blanket, with a pillow, perhaps, but without any other appendage. The term "bed" has this meaning in various passages. It was an article of this description that the paralytic used whom the Saviour directed to "rise, take up his bed and walk," (Mark 2, 9.) It is customary now for those who use such pallets to roll them up in the morning and lay them aside till they have occasion to spread them out again for the next night's repose. It is necessary to bear in mind this difference between eastern customs and our own, in order to account for certain statements in the New Testament. We read that, on several occasions, friends of the sick laid them on beds, and brought them in this situation to Christ and the apostles, to be healed of their diseases.

#### CURSING ONE'S ANCESTORS.

Just beyond El-Arish, the last town in Egypt before entering Palestine, we saw, at a little distance from our path, a flock of sheep, so immensely large as to excite our wonder. For the sake of getting a better view we turned aside and went towards them. Three women were watching them; on our approach they fled, gesticulating fiercely as they went, and pouring out a volley of words almost terrific. On coming back, I asked the dragoman what the women had

been saying so earnestly, and received for answer that they had been cursing my father and mother, and grandfather, and all my ancestors. I might have felt much worse had I understood all this ; but, fortunately, they had spoken to deaf ears.

Such a mode of resenting an affront belongs to the eastern character. We find, at least, one trace of the same habit in the Bible. In 1 Samuel 20, 30, we read that "Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse, rebellious woman." Saul was not angry with his wife ; it was not the mother whom he would reproach ; he would represent the son as blameworthy, and meant by that mode of address to vent his indignation on him. A principle not discreditable to human nature lies at the bottom of this. It supposes it to be more offensive to a correct filial instinct to hear the name or memory of one's parents insulted, than to bear the reproach in one's own person. "Strike *me*," said the servant of a traveler in the East, "but do not curse my mother."

#### USE OF ORNAMENTS.

The employment of these women showed how unchanged the pastoral habits of the country have been through successive ages. In the days of the patriarchs, also, females were entrusted often with the care of the flocks. As Jacob stood at the well of Haran, to which the shepherds of the neighborhood resorted, Rachel, it is said, "came with her father's sheep ; for she kept them," (Genesis 29, 9.)

Again, their dress, their personal attire, illustrated another custom or taste of the ancient daughters of the land. The women of whom I have spoken wore a profusion of ornaments but poorly in keeping with their occupation, if we may apply to them our own ideas of the graceful and the becoming. Their heads, arms and ankles, were loaded with chains and bracelets, which, though we were not near enough to judge of their intrinsic value, certainly gave to their possessors at a distance a very resplendent appearance. The sight brought up vividly before me the image of Rebekah as she went home from the well, wearing the rich presents which Eleazar had bestowed on her; "a golden ear-ring, of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets on her hands, of ten shekels weight of gold," (Genesis 24, 22.) Her allowing herself to be arrayed in this manner, at such a time, shows that it was common for females to appear abroad in such splendor, even when engaged in the coarser labors which their social position devolved on them. If the reader is curious to know how far the Hebrew women carried their love of decoration, he may consult the latter part of the third chapter of Isaiah. He will find there the oldest description of a lady's toilet which has come down to us. The fashions of modern life could hardly furnish a fuller catalogue of the trinkets used for adorning the person than the one recorded in that passage.

## AN ADVENTURE AT EL-BIREH.

At the present day, women in the East are rarely seen abroad, whatever may be their rank in life, without being



decked with jewelry, or the semblance of jewelry, of some kind. They often convert (so it is said) all their property into such articles, and wear them on their persons. A string of coins, in particular, plaited like a chain and hung across the forehead and down the sides of the face, forms, quite universally, a part of their ordinary attire. It is wanting only in cases of extreme poverty.

Such ornaments descend in families as a sacred legacy from mother to daughter. Nothing can exceed the jealousy with which they guard the possession of these treasures. On a certain occasion a trifling incident brought out an exhibition of this feeling in our presence, which it may not be out of place to mention. As we were traveling from Jerusalem northward, we stopped for a few moments at El-Bireh, which means the Well, the Beer or Beeroth spoken of in Judges 9, 21. Several females were there washing a heap of clothes in the little stream which issues from the well, beating them with clubs such as they are accustomed to use for that purpose. They all wore the occipital ornament, the string of coins, which I have mentioned as so common there. One of our number, influenced by an inconsiderate curiosity, stepped forward towards one of the younger women, and extended his hand to examine the coins about her head, in order to see whether they were Turkish, or Jewish, or Roman, or what they were. A terrible outburst of indignation followed this act. The offended damsel shrieked out at the top of her voice, brandished her weapon in a menacing manner, and invoked the aid of the other women, already showing une-

quivocal signs of rage, to shield her against the aggressor. It could not be expected that the scales of victory would waver long in such a contest. Without confessing in so many words that we fled, we certainly did not think it best to dispute the field tenaciously. The case seemed to call for the exercise of that discretion which is said to be the better part of valor.

#### POSTURE IN PRAYER.

The common attitude of worshippers in the East is kneeling, with the upper part of the body now erect, and then thrown forward, so as to bring the head in contact with the earth; they alternate between the one posture and the other. In this case, it will be observed, the worshipper remains on his knees, even when he bends forward, with his face to the ground or the floor. It is remarkable that three of the Evangelists, in speaking of the posture of the Saviour during his prayer in the garden, use three different expressions. Luke says (22, 41) that our Lord knelt down; Mark (14, 25), that he fell upon the earth; and Matthew (26, 39), that he fell upon his face.

In regard to the last two writers the variation seems to be only verbal; but how are they consistent with Luke? It is quite possible that their different expressions refer to different parts of the same act. The Saviour, habituated to the customary forms of worship, may have bowed his knees, and, without changing that position, may also have stooped forward, and inclined his face to the earth. This explanation

conciliates entirely the Evangelists with each other, and accords with the manner in which prayer is still offered. In Genesis 17, 3 it is said that Abraham, as he worshipped God, "fell upon his face" before him. This may have been a similar act, including the kneeling, as well as the prostration, though the latter only is mentioned. Another view is, which appears to me less simple, that our Lord knelt down at first, and then afterwards, as he became more earnest in his supplications, changed his posture, and lay prostrate on the earth.

#### FUNERAL RITES.

Near Pompey's Pillar, so called, at Alexandria, is an extensive burying ground of the Mohammedan inhabitants. On the first day of my arrival there, as I was passing that cemetery, I saw, at a distance, a large company of people assembled around one of the tombs, and could hear a confused cry of voices, proceeding from those who were uttering their lamentations over the dead whom they had come to bury. Mr. Lane, who has given so authentic an account of the manners of the modern Egyptians, says that, at funerals, women, related to the deceased, to the number of a dozen or more, are accustomed to walk behind the bier, crying and shrieking as they proceed; and, also, that persons hired to act as mourners often accompany them, whose office it is to bewail the dead, and extol their merits.

At Khan Yunus, our first town on entering Syria, where our quarantine began, we were put under the care of a health officer, and, by an odd arrangement (the superstitious might

have thought it a bad omen), were directed to pitch our tents in a grave-yard. It was Friday when we arrived there, the Sabbath of the Mohammedans, when they are in the habit of visiting the cemeteries, as one of the stated observances of the day. We found here a great number of women, seated at the graves, most of them dressed in white robes, and looking, in such a place, almost as if they might have been the ghosts of the departed, still flitting about the haunts of the living. The next morning, too, before sunrise, several of them made their appearance again, and, taking their stand at one of the graves, lifted up their voices and shrieked and wept for a long time, till the want of strength seemed to oblige them to give over the effort.

The mode of testifying respect for the memory of the dead in early times must have been essentially the same. When Joseph and his brethren, on the decease of Jacob their father, were carrying up the body for burial at Hebron, they stopped at "the threshing-floor of Atad, beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation. And the inhabitants of the land, when they saw the mourning, said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians," (Genesis 50, 10. 11.) The prophet Jeremiah refers evidently to a class of women employed to act as public mourners, when he says (9, 17. 18) :

"Give ear ! Call the mourning women, that they come,  
And to the skilful women send, that they come ;  
Let them hasten, and lift up the lamentation over us,

That our eyes may run with tears,  
And our eyelids may flow with water."

#### AN OPEN BIER.

I was one day examining the inscriptions on the grave-stones in the Armenian and Latin cemeteries, on the southern part of Mount Zion, when I perceived, from some preparations going forward, that a burial was about to take place. I prolonged my stay for the purpose of witnessing the ceremony. Presently a funeral procession, consisting of men and women, came rapidly from the city,\* and halted at a newly-made grave sunk three or four feet only below the ground. The body was not enclosed in a coffin, but wrapped in a loose garment and laid on a bier carried by hand. My impression is that even the face was partially exposed to view.

It was under similar circumstances that the son of the widow at Nain was borne to the grave. In that case, too, the cemetery was outside of the town. The body, also, must have been placed on an open bier, and have been unconfined; for the compassionate Saviour, when he saw the mother's distress, "came and touched the bier," and at his word, "Arise," "he that was dead sat up and began to speak." The cases were parallel in another particular. The account says that on perceiving our Lord's design to interpose, "they that bare the body stood still." On the occasion referred to there was, at least, one mourner present, who showed by her emotion that the death which had opened that grave had

\* The burial-place lies outside of the present Jerusalem.

come specially near to her. See the narrative of the raising of the widow's son in Luke 7, 12—15.

## SCENE IN THE HOUSE OF JAIRUS.

During my stay at Jerusalem I frequently heard a singular cry issuing from the houses in the neighborhood of the place where I lodged, or from those on the streets through which I passed. It was to be heard at all hours — in the morning, at noonday, at evening, or in the deep silence of night. For some time I was at a loss to understand the cause of this strange interruption of the stillness which, for the most part, hangs so oppressively over the lonely city. Had it not been so irregular in its occurrence, I might have supposed it to indicate some festive occasion; for the tones of voice (yet hardly tones so much as shrieks), used for the expression of different feelings, sound so much alike to the unpractised ear, that it is not easy always to distinguish the mournful and the joyous from each other. I ascertained, at length, that this peculiar cry was, no doubt, in most instances, the signal of the death of some person in the house from which it was heard. It is customary, when a member of the family is about to die, for the friends to assemble around him, and watch the ebbing away of life, so as to remark the precise moment when he breathes his last; upon which they set up instantly a united outcry, attended with weeping, and often with beating upon the breast, and tearing out the hair of the head. This lamentation they repeat at other times, especially at the funeral, both during the procession to the grave and

after the arrival there; as they commit the remains to their last resting-place.

The narratives of the New Testament remind us of similar scenes in the days of the Saviour. Let us note the circumstances of one of them. Our Lord was discoursing one day to a crowd on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias, when a ruler of the synagogue from Capernaum besought him to repair to his house, and heal his daughter, who was at the point of death. He started to accompany the anxious father, but was met on the way with a message that the child was dead, and that his coming would be of no avail. Without regarding this information, he went forward, and on arriving at the house, says the Evangelist, he "beheld a tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly." On perceiving this, "he saith unto them, Why are ye making an outcry and weeping? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth;" because, relatively to his power, death was merely a slumber; he had only to speak the word, and the lifeless rose at once to consciousness and activity. He employs a similar expression in regard to the state of Lazarus, which, the sacred writer says expressly, was spoken of his death. See John 11, 11, sq. How exactly, at the moment of the Saviour's arrival, did the house of Jairus correspond with the condition of one, at the present time, in which a death has just taken place! It resounded with the same boisterous expression of grief, for which the natives of the East are still noted. The lamentation must have commenced, also, at the instant of the child's decease; for when Jesus arrived he found the mourn-

ers already present, and singing the death-dirge. See Mark 5, 22, sq.

The account discloses another mark of accuracy which may be worth pointing out. Matthew (9, 23) speaks of "minstrels" as taking part in the tumult. The use of instruments of music at such times is not universal, but depends on the circumstances of the family. It involves some expense, which cannot always be afforded. Mr. Lane mentions that it is chiefly at the funerals of the rich among the Egyptians that musicians are employed to contribute their part to the mournful celebration. The "minstrels," therefore, appear very properly in this particular history. Jairus, the father of the damsel whom Christ restored to life, since he was a ruler of the synagogue, must have been a person of some rank among his countrymen. In such a family the most decent style of performing the last sad offices would be observed.

#### EARLY HOURS.

In reading the account of the Saviour's trial and crucifixion, it must appear singular, to one without a knowledge of the habits of the East, that so much connected with that occasion should have been accomplished before sunrise, or a little later. We find that the Jews and the Romans who took part in the affair were astir on that eventful morning at hours when it would be impossible, under our arrangements for the transaction of business, to secure the attendance of public bodies and magistrates. Some of the things,

it is true — (I refer to Christ's apprehension, and, perhaps, the interview with Annas) — may have been done at an unseasonable time, even as compared with the early hours of the East. But this remark will not apply to other parts of the trial. We read, for instance, that a session of the Sanhedrim, fully attended, was held as soon as it was day (Luke 22, 66, compared with Mark, 15 1); and that Christ's various examinations before that body, and before Pilate and Herod, were all concluded, so that, as Mark states (15, 25), it was only the third hour, that is, nine o'clock in the morning, according to our time, when the Saviour was crucified. Such despatch, evidently, would be impossible in many countries, and if related as having taken place there in connection with a similar history, would give to the account an air of improbability. On the other hand, the early activity of the Jews in carrying forward their measures against Christ appears entirely in place, when we transfer the occurrence to its proper scene; it serves, indeed, to authenticate the narrative as true.

During a great part of the year, in Palestine, the heat becomes so great a few hours after sunrise as to render any strenuous labor inconvenient. The early morning, therefore, is the proper time for work; midday is given up, as far as may be possible, to rest, or employments which do not require exposure to the sun. The arrangements of life adjust themselves to this character of the climate. It happened to me often to observe how universal was the habit of early rising. Men and women may be seen going forth to

their labors in the field, or starting on journeys, at the earliest break of day. Frequently companies of muleteers, carrying merchandise from one part of the country to another, encamped at night on the same ground with us. Our usual time for setting off was sunrise; but we found, quite invariably, that they had risen, packed up and departed, before we were ready to move. The night was still struggling with day when I left the menzel at Seleh,\* but groups of females, equipped with hoe and mattock, were already wending their way to the fields, to begin their daily toil. Being anxious at Jerusalem to attend the services of a Jewish synagogue, I was summoned to rise for that purpose before it was light. In one instance I went thither at an early hour, as we should call it, but found myself too late; the service was ended, the people gone, and the synagogue closed for the day.

If any one has not attended to this point, and will look into a Concordance of the English Scriptures, he will be surprised to notice how often mention is made of the "early morning" as the time for beginning the labors of the day. Thus, "Abraham rose up early in the morning," when he went to offer Isaac on Moriah, (Genesis 22, 3.) "Jacob rose up early in the morning and set up a pillar," (Genesis 28, 18.) "Moses rose early in the morning, and built an altar," (Exodus 34, 4.) When the servant of Elisha "was risen early and gone forth, behold, a host encompassed the city," (2 Kings 6, 15.) "Thou art my God," says the Psalmist,

\* See on page 58 of this work.

(63, 1), "early will I seek thee." The apostles "entered into the temple early in the morning and taught," (Acts 5, 21.) Scores of other examples might be added to these.

#### USE OF THE WORD "BROTHER."

The application of this word in the Scriptures is much more extensive than it is in the languages of the western nations. The manner in which it is sometimes employed has not only excited surprise, but seemed almost to justify the charge of inadvertence or inconsistency on the part of the sacred writers. Thus, in Genesis 14, 16, Lot is called the brother of Abraham; but in Genesis 11, 31, he is said to have been his brother's son, namely, his nephew. In Genesis 29, 11, Jacob tells Rachel that he was "her father's brother;" but according to Genesis 28, 6, Laban was not Jacob's brother, as we use the term, but the brother of Rebekah, his mother. The word has a loose sense, probably, in Galatians 1, 19. In 2 Samuel 19, 13, "brother" denotes a person of the same tribe; in Judges 14, 3, one of the same country, and in Job 6, 15, a friend or associate. Other examples might be added to these.

But this use of the term, foreign as it is to our mode of employing it, is entirely consistent with the practice of the East at the present day. The Orientals extend the term "brother," so far at least as the name is concerned, not only to remote degrees of relationship, as uncles, cousins, nephews, but to friends and acquaintances where there is no bond of natural affinity. As I was on the eve of leaving Alexandria,

a Syrian came to me, and commended to my special favor the person who had been engaged as dragoman for the journey to Palestine, alleging, as a reason for manifesting so much interest in his behalf, that the man was his brother. Some days after this I was making some inquiry of the dragoman respecting his brother, in terms which showed that I had understood the word in its strictest sense. "But you are mistaken," said the dragoman; "the man is not my brother in that sense; he is only a fellow-townsmen and a friend." In some passages of the Bible it is difficult to determine the exact meaning which should be assigned to the word in question.

#### THE NILE A SEA.

The subject of the last paragraph suggests one or two other expressions, which illustrate or confirm the idiom of the Scriptures. It may be as well to insert them here as anywhere. The people of the East apply the word "sea" not only to inland collections of water, as Bahr el-Lut, the Sea of Lot, our Dead Sea (a usage which we follow), Bahr el-Merjun, Sea of the Meadows, a lake in the plain of Damascus, but to large rivers, especially the Nile. The boatmen on that river constantly speak of it under that designation. This custom explains Nahum 3, 8, where the prophet speaks of No, called Thebes by the Greeks and Romans, as surrounded by the sea, though it was situated in Upper Egypt on the Nile. Addressing Nineveh, he says:

"Art thou better than No-Ammon,  
Who dwelt by the rivers?

The waters were round about her,  
Whose fortress was the sea,  
A sea was her wall,  
Cush was her strength, and Egypt, numbers without end."

#### THE NAME OF EGYPT.

The origin of the term Egypt is not certainly known. It does not occur in the original language of the Old Testament, the name there being uniformly Mizraim, or the land of Mizraim. It is remarkable that this latter term, which never passed into the western languages, or, at least, a fragment of the term, exists still among the modern Egyptians. They know the country only as *Misr*, allied, unquestionably, to the old Semitic or Hebrew appellation.

#### SPORTS OF CHILDREN.

"When I was a child," said the Apostle Paul, "I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child," (1 Corinthians 13, 11.) Some one has remarked that customs are handed down from age to age with less change among boys than through any other medium. The transmission of the same sports among them, not only in the same countries, but in different countries and nations, affords, perhaps, some confirmation of this remark. At an hour's distance from Nazareth, on the way to the Sea of Tiberias, we came to Er-Reineh, a small village inhabited by Greek Christians and Mussulmans. It was quite an unexpected sight to me here to look up and see a paper kite floating gracefully in the air. A boy was amusing himself with it. The frame,

shape and pendant, gave to it exactly the appearance of one of our Yankee kites. I recognized elsewhere some of the diversions familiar to childhood. At Zebedany, a village on Anti-Lebanon, I saw a group of boys playing leap-frog; at Kerak, near the eastern foot of Lebanon, I saw them playing ball; and at another place, the name of which I have not noted, I saw them playing hop-scotch.

## CHAPTER III.

### CLIMATE, SOIL, AND PRODUCTIONS.

It will be understood that it is no part of my design to present a full account of the subjects named in the title of this chapter. As in the preceding pages, so here, the notices are altogether fragmentary, and are intended merely to recall a few facts here and there, under the particular heads to which they are referred, for the purpose of connecting them with the passages or statements of Scripture which they are suited to illustrate. I arrived at Alexandria on the second of March, by the way of Italy and Malta, and remained in Egypt, or parts of Western Asia, until the middle of June. These months constitute, unquestionably, the most favorable and interesting period for visiting that portion of the world; except that one should be there a few weeks earlier, if he would extend his journey far into Upper Egypt. Most of the remarks in this chapter and the succeeding one relate, necessarily, to that division of the year. We are to glance, therefore, at a few only of the many-sided connections of the Bible with the operations of nature, and the varied employments of men, as affected by the succession of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest. Of course, the other seasons

of the year, also, bring with them their peculiar aspects and variations, which would enlarge the traveler's field of observation, and supply him with other and important means for illustrating the sacred Word. It is desirable, in order to invest the Scriptures with their full power to instruct and impress us, to bring them as fully as possible into connection with all the circumstances which surrounded the inspired writers.

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#### THE MUSTARD-SEED PLANT.

In the parable of the mustard-seed, it is said that this seed, although the smallest of all seeds when cast into the earth, becomes, when grown up, a great tree (in a comparative sense, of course), and puts forth branches, so that the fowls of heaven come and lodge among them. I was beginning to fear that I should leave the country without having an opportunity to see any example of this plant answering to the description of it in the parable. Of the various persons of whom I had made inquiry at Jerusalem, no one was able to give me any certain information. One said that probably this species of the plant was now extinct. Another said that it was reputed to grow very large in Galilee, but could not vouch for it from personal observation. I had observed, indeed, in crossing the plain of Esdraelon, just before coming to Nazareth, that the mustard-plant was by no means uncommon there; but yet, though some of the stalks which I took pains to measure were quite large, they were still not so large as I had expected to find them, and

not large enough, as it appeared to me, to suggest naturally the illustration in the parable. I was, therefore, disappointed.

Some days after this, as I was riding across the plain of Akka, on the way to Carmel, I perceived, at some distance from the path, what seemed to be a little forest or nursery of trees. I turned aside to examine them. On coming nearer, they proved to be an extensive field of the plant which I was so anxious to see. It was then in blossom, full grown, in some cases six, seven, and nine feet high, with a stem or trunk an inch or more in thickness, throwing out branches on every side. I was now satisfied in part. I felt that such a plant might well be called a tree, and, in comparison with the seed producing it, a great tree. But still the branches, or stems of the branches, were not very large, or, apparently, very strong. Can the birds, I said to myself, rest upon them? Are they not too slight and flexible? Will they not bend or break beneath the superadded weight? At that very instant, as I stood and revolved the thought, lo! one of the fowls of heaven stopped in its flight through the air, alighted down on one of the branches, which hardly moved beneath the shock, and then began, perched there before my eyes, to warble forth a strain of the richest music. All my doubts were now charmed away. I was delighted at the incident. It seemed to me at the moment as if I enjoyed enough to repay me for all the trouble of the whole journey.

Such incidental illustrations of Scripture furnish no small

share of the gratification which the traveler receives from day to day, as he wanders through the lands of the Bible. He finds that he has a local commentary spread everywhere around him, which brings home to him the language and scenes of the Bible with a freshness and power which no learning or skill of commentators can supply.

I am aware that some give to the original word for "mustard" a generic sense, so as to understand a tree, properly so called. But, as no necessity demands such an extension of the term, it is more correct to adhere to the ordinary meaning. Besides, the Evangelists include the mustard-plant of which they speak among herbs or vegetables, and thus indicate that when they call it a "tree" they make use of a popular hyperbole.

#### GRASS ON THE HOUSE-TOPS.

At Anata, the Anathoth of Scripture, already mentioned,\* I observed that the roofs of some of the houses were partially covered with grass; a circumstance which I noticed, also, in several other places. As the roofs of the common dwellings are flat, and, instead of being built of stone or wood, are coated with plaster or hardened earth, a slight crop of grass frequently springs up in that situation. Such vegetation, however, having no soil into which it can strike its roots, and being exposed to a scorching sun, rarely attains to any great height, or continues long; it is a feeble, stunted product, and soon withers away. Hence the sacred writers sometimes allude to the grass on the house-tops as an em-

\* See the Illustration on the 75th page.

blem of weakness, frailty and certain destruction. Thus, in Psalm 129, 6. 7, it is said :

“ They shall be ashamed and turn back,  
All those that hate Zion.  
They shall be as grass upon the house-tops,  
Which, before one plucks it, withers away ;  
With which the mower fills not his hand,  
Nor the sheaf-binder his arms.”

In Isaiah 37, 27, the prophet says, with reference to the people of Judah, whom the Assyrians threatened to destroy :

“ And their inhabitants were of feeble power,  
They were confounded and dismayed ;  
They became as grass of the field and the green herb,  
As the grass of the house-tops, and the blasted corn.”

#### THORNS.

Every one who has been in Palestine must have been struck with the number of thorny shrubs and plants that abound there. The traveler finds them in his path, go where he may. Many of them are small, but some grow as high as a man's head. The Rabbinical writers say that there are no less than twenty-two words in the Hebrew Bible denoting thorny and prickly plants. The prevalence of such shrubs, say agriculturists, shows a luxuriant soil. If proper care be not taken they soon get the upper hand, and spread in every direction. “ I went by the field of the slothful — and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof,” (Proverbs 24, 30. 31.) “ The way of

the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns; but the way of the righteous is made plain," (Proverbs 15, 19.) "Break up your fallow ground," says the prophet, "and sow not among thorns," (Jeremiah 4, 3.) As descriptive of the desolation of Edom, it is said: "Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof." The crown put on the head of the Saviour was made of thorns, (Matthew 27, 29.) The sharp points, as the soldiers "smote him with a reed," may have been driven into his head, piercing and tearing the flesh. A species of thorn, now very common near Jerusalem, bears the name of *Spina Christi*, or *Christ's thorn*.

The people of the country gather these bushes and plants, and use them as fuel. As it is now, so it was of old. "As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool," (Ecclesiastes 7, 6.) "Before your pots can feel the thorns," namely, the fire of them, "he shall sweep them away," (Psalm 58, 9.) The figure in this case is taken from travelers in the desert, or from shepherds tenting abroad, who build a fire in the open air, where it is exposed to the wind; a sudden gust arises and sweeps away the fuel almost before it has begun to burn. "As thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire," (Isaiah 33, 12.) The meaning is that the wicked are worthless, — their destruction shall be sudden and complete.

#### CHASTISING THE MEN OF SUCCOTH.

In Judges 8, 7, Gideon threatens to "tear the flesh of the princes of Succoth," a town on the east of the Jordan,

“with the thorns of the wilderness and with briars,” because they refused to supply his men with bread, as he was “pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.” On his return, after defeating his enemies, he executed that threat. “He took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briars, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.” The Rev. Dr. Smith, missionary at Beirut, who had recently visited the Jordan in that neighborhood, told me that he found thorn-bushes and brambles still growing there of a remarkable size. Some of the taller thistles, he said, rose above his head, even when mounted on horseback. He had good reason for adding that a lesson enforced with such instruments must have been effectually taught. I sometimes attempted to force my way through such thickets, but found it attended with peril both to body and raiment.

Gideon’s mode of punishment reminds us of that said to have been inflicted by the ancient Egyptians on those who were guilty of parricide. Regarding “the murder of a father as the most unnatural of crimes, they endeavored to prevent its occurrence by the marked severity with which it was avenged. The criminal was, therefore, sentenced to be lacerated with sharpened reeds, and after being thrown on thorns he was burnt to death.”\*

“HUSKS” IN THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL.

The word “husks” is an unfortunate translation of the Greek term for which it is employed. The word so rendered

\* Wilkinson’s Ancient Egyptians, Vol. II., p. 209

signifies "little horns," with reference to the extended and slightly curved shape of the pods of the fruit of the Carob-tree; that fruit being the article of food which the prodigal is represented as having eaten. The Carob-tree is found, not only in Egypt and Syria, but in Greece, and other parts of southern Europe. It is a large tree, with a thick foliage and wide-spreading branches. I saw it growing on the Mount of Olives, and elsewhere around Jerusalem. The fruit is a leguminous product, resembling the pod of our locust-tree, but much larger: it has a sweetish pulp when tender, but soon becomes dry and hard, with small seeds which rattle in the pod when shaken. It emits a slight-odor, when first gathered, offensive to those whom use has not accustomed to it. The poorer class of people employ it as food in the countries where it is produced. I was told at Smyrna that it is in great request, in some of the Greek islands, as a nutritious article for fattening swine. It constituted a part of the provender (unless it was a very similar product) with which our camels were fed in traveling through the desert. I saw great quantities of this fruit exposed for sale in the market at Smyrna. Some specimens which I brought away with me averaged six and eight inches in length, though they are said



to be often eight or ten inches long. It is not meant in the parable that the prodigal resorted to food absolutely fit only for swine; but that he who had been brought up in wealth and luxury was reduced to such want as to be obliged to subsist on the meanest fare.

#### TARES.

In passing through the fertile country of the ancient Philistines, on the south of Palestine, I asked the guide, one day, a native Syrian, if he knew of a plant which was apt to make its appearance among the wheat, and which resembled it so much that it could hardly be distinguished from it. He replied that it was very common, and that he would soon show me a specimen of it. Soon after this he pointed out to me some of this grass, growing near our path; and afterwards, having once seen it, I found it in almost every field where I searched for it. Except that the stalk was not so high, it appeared otherwise precisely like wheat, just as the ears begin to show themselves, and the kernels are swelling out into shape.

This is the plant to which the Saviour referred in the parable, as the tares which sprang up among the wheat, and which the owner, because it was so much like the genuine wheat, directed his servants to suffer to remain until the harvest, "lest, while they gathered up the tares, they should root up also the wheat with them," (Matthew 13, 24, sq.) I collected some specimens of this deceitful weed, and have found, on showing them to friends, that they have mistaken

them quite invariably for some species of grain, such as wheat or barley.

#### THE GRASS OF THE OVEN.

In crossing the mountains of Lebanon, we stopped, one day, for refreshment, near a rivulet flowing towards the east. As I was sitting there I observed a peasant of the country digging up, with a sort of pickaxe, the clumps of shrubs and coarse grass which grow in the thin soil spread over the rocks. He was collecting them to carry home, in order to burn them as fuel. I had seen heaps of the same material piled up near the lime-kilns in the vicinity of Urtas ; and I frequently saw troops of donkeys returning from the fields loaded with bundles of such fuel. The scarcity of wood in Palestine is very great, especially in the southern part ; so that the people are obliged to resort to the use of almost everything that is capable of being burnt, in order to procure the means of warming their houses in winter, and of preparing their daily food. They not only cut down, for this purpose, the shrubs and larger kinds of grass, but gather the common withered grass itself, and the wild flowers, of which the fields display so rich a profusion.

It is from this source that the Saviour derives the beautiful illustration, which he employs for the purpose of repressing an undue solicitude, on the part of his followers, respecting the wants of the present life : " Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you that even Solomon, in all his glory,

was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 6, 28—30.)

#### ANECDOTE OF MUNGO PARK.

The well known traveler, Mungo Park, relates an incident concerning himself, which presents the passage just quoted in so striking a light that it deserves to be mentioned here. It shows how effectually, under certain circumstances, the flowers of the field may convey to a thoughtful mind the lessons which our Saviour would have us derive from them. "One day," he says, "I found myself in the midst of a vast wilderness (it was one of the African deserts), in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone, surrounded by savage animals, and men still more savage. I was five hundred miles from any European settlement. Whatever way I turned, nothing appeared but danger and difficulty. At this moment, painful as my reflections were, the extraordinary beauty of a small moss in fructification irresistibly caught my eye. Though the whole plant was not larger than the top of one of my fingers, I could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves and capsules, without admiration. Can that Being, thought I, who planted, watered and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after his own image? Surely not. I started up,

and, disregarding hunger and fatigue, traveled forward, assured that relief was at hand; and I was not disappointed." \*

## SIGN OF SUMMER.

On my first arrival in the southern part of Syria, near the end of March, most of the fruit-trees were clothed with foliage and in blossom. The fig-tree, on the contrary, was much behind them, in this respect; for the leaves of this tree do not make their appearance till comparatively late in the season. On this circumstance appears to be founded Christ's saying: "When its branch is already tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh," (Matthew 24, 32.) As the spring is so far advanced before the leaves of the fig-tree begin to appear (the early fruit, indeed, comes first), a person may be sure, when he beholds this sign, that summer is at hand.

## PECULIARITY OF THE FIG-TREE.

It is well known that the fig-tree does not produce visible blossoms. It is not destitute of them, but they are concealed in the corolla, and so effectually as to lead to the popular idea that they are wholly wanting. Even Plutarch and Pliny among the ancients believed that the fig-tree does not blossom at all. Hence, in striking agreement with this fact, though we read in the Old Testament of the flower of the almond, of the lily, of the olive and the vine, we never read of the flower of the fig-tree. One of our religious hymns

\*The Life of Mungo Park (12mo, Edinburgh, 1835), p. 116.

says of the barren fig-tree, which disappoints the hopes of the cultivator,

“ It yields no fruit, no blossom bears,  
Though planted by his hands.”

This reference to the blossom, since it does not show itself to the eye, is out of place in such a connection. It betrays the foreign writer. A native writer, accustomed to the fig-tree, would not be likely to allude to a hidden blossom as if it were an outward sign. A critic might have seized on such an expression in the Prophets, or in the parables of Christ, as evidence that they never lived in Palestine. The passage in Habakkuk (3, 17) is only an apparent exception to these remarks; for the prophet's language in the original is entirely correct, and he should be rendered as saying: “Although the fig-tree should not bear,” not “blossom.” \*

#### A BLASTING WIND.

At the close of the day, March the thirty-first, we pitched our tents near the site of Ashdod, the Azotus of Acts 8, 40. A little village not far off, called Esdud, perpetuates the ancient name. Ashdod was one of the chief cities of the Philistines, but is now utterly forsaken. The prophet's sentence has been executed upon it to the letter: “I will cut

\* What is suggested here as possible turns out to be a fact. A writer in one of the public journals, referring to this paragraph, previously published, says that he has known this very inadvertence of our translators to be urged as proof that the Scriptures are inaccurate and untrustworthy.

off the inhabitant from Ashdod," (Amos 1, 8.) The only marks of antiquity which I could discover were a high mound, where the old city stood, covered now with fragments of pottery; two or three cellars or cisterns, that seemed to have been recently laid open; two marble columns, one prostrate in the court of a neighboring khan, and the other wrought into a drinking-trough; several broken pieces of columns or tablets, mostly built into a Sakieh or watering-machine; and a few traces of masonry near the Jaffa road, which may have belonged to the city walls. These last are so concealed as to be found only with special pains.

Just before dark, the temperature, which during the day had not been oppressive, suddenly changed. The air, in a few moments, became hot like that from a strongly heated furnace. This extreme variation lasted but a short time, though the night which followed was exceedingly warm. Had it continued much longer, as the natives assured us, it would have done serious injury to the grain, which was then near its maturity. A hot wind, occurring just before the harvest is ripe, is often mentioned in the Bible as one of the greatest calamities which the husbandman had occasion to fear. When Pharaoh in his dream saw "the seven ears of corn blasted by the east wind," he beheld in that symbol the significant intimation of an approaching famine. The blasting of the grain, that is, as the original word shows, by a scorching wind, is threatened as a judgment in various passages. See Deuteronomy 28, 22; 2 Kings 19, 26; Amos 4, 9, and Isaiah 37, 27. In 1 Kings 8, 37, it is mentioned among

the visitations of God from which the Jews had special reason to pray to be delivered.

#### ALTERNATIONS OF HEAT AND COLD.

Jacob, in enumerating his claims on the gratitude of Laban, his father-in-law, for having served him so faithfully, speaks of having endured the heat by day and the frost by night, (Genesis 31, 40.) His employment, as keeper of the flocks and herds, required him to be much in the open fields, protected only by a tent, and often, no doubt, without any shelter; a mode of life which exposed him to the sudden alternations of heat and cold which distinguish that climate. He was then living in Mesopotamia; but the inequality between the temperature of day and night, which prevails there, is found also in the more southern parts of the country. It happened to me frequently to need all the precaution I could adopt, in order to guard against the cold at night, even when the heat of the preceding day had been as great as could well be borne.

The following case will illustrate the nature of these variations; though I ought to say that very possibly the change was the greater in this instance, because several snow-capped mountains were so near as to be within sight. I spent the night of the fourteenth of May on the banks of the Litany, the ancient Leontes, which drains the southern part of the magnificent plain between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. It is certain that whatever effect the vicinity of masses of snow may have on the temperature by night, when the sun is withdrawn,

the heat by day is not sensibly affected by that circumstance. We had been obliged to halt some hours earlier than usual, in order to avoid the exposure of riding under a scorching sun. The heat, which had been sufficiently inconvenient on the mountains, became doubly oppressive on descending into the plain. A little after mid-day, therefore, we encamped at the bridge near El-Merj, grateful for the sight of a cooling stream, and for an opportunity to screen ourselves beneath the shelter of a tent. Yet the ensuing night was decidedly cold; we passed, in a few hours, from the midst of summer to the verge of winter. On resuming the journey the next morning, between four and five o'clock, I found the protection of an additional garment necessary, and was obliged to ride rapidly to keep from being chilled. Notwithstanding these precautions, my fingers, ere long, were so benumbed that I could hardly grasp the reins. This continued till the sun at length began to dart his beams over the summits of Anti-Lebanon, as we turned out of the plain into Wady Huriry. The cold then rapidly abated; the additional garment became unnecessary; and, before many hours, a tide of heat was pouring down upon us which renewed fully the experience of the preceding day. It must be confessed that a frequent exposure to such vicissitudes by day and night would furnish a good claim to a generous requital for labors attended with such hardship.

The climate in the valley of the Jordan is warmer than in any other part of Palestine; but here, too, the days and nights are very unequal, in this respect. In the afternoon

of May the fourth, my tent was pitched on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias. The thermometer, which was down to temperate at sunrise the next morning, rose about twenty degrees in two hours. A comparison with an earlier hour would have showed a still greater change.

#### A FIRE BY NIGHT.

One of the weeks which I spent at Jerusalem was the one corresponding with that in which the Saviour was apprehended and put to death. The week of the crucifixion was the week of the Passover, which fell near the end of March, or the beginning of April. It is related that it was then so cold at night that the servants kindled a fire in the court of the high priest. It was there that Peter stood and warmed himself, when he was recognized as a disciple, and was tempted to deny his Master. This incident of the fire characterizes the climate perfectly. The nights at Jerusalem, at this season of the year, are cool, though the days may be hot. The air, soon after sundown, becomes chilly, and, under the open sky, a person who regarded his convenience would need still either to increase his raiment or to have recourse to a fire.

The Evangelist John (18, 18) states that the fire which the servants kindled on that occasion was made of coals. This notice, too, which drops so incidentally from the writer (the other Evangelists omit it), tallies with the customs of the country. Coal is one of the articles of fuel which the people at Jerusalem use at the present day. It is made, in

part, says Dr. Tobler,\* of pine wood, obtained in the region of Hebron. The Greek word employed in this case denotes charcoal, or coal made from wood.

THE NIGHT OF THE BETRAYAL.

Since the Jewish Passover began fourteen days after the appearance of the new moon, the moon must have been at the full at the time of the crucifixion. I do not recollect that the sky was overcast with a single cloud on any one of the evenings of the holy week, at the beginning of April, 1852. Although, at that season of the year, the latter rain has not wholly ceased, it is so nearly past that a cloudy night is much less apt to occur than one entirely clear. I can never forget the interest with which I repaired, on some of these nights, to the roof of the house where I lodged at Jerusalem. The city lay disclosed to view, under the beams of a bright moonlight, almost with the distinctness of an early twilight. Not a cloud or vapor passed over the face of the sky. The towering form of Olivet was visible at a little distance, across the valley of the Kedron, on the east. Still nearer, at the base of the mount, was Gethsemane, even more silent at those hours than when the voice of the Sufferer was heard, saying, "Not my will, but thine be done."

It was on such a night, beyond doubt, that the scenes took place which resulted in the Saviour's death. The lines of Watts, so familiar to every ear,

" 'T was on that dark, that doleful night,  
 When powers of earth and hell arose,"

\* Denkblätter aus Jerusalem (1853), p. 180.

suggest, indeed, a fit time, in point of moral congruity, for the betrayal and the apprehension; but, in all probability, the night externally was one of the loveliest which the circle of the year affords. His pursuers, it is true, carried with them "lanterns and torches;" but they would need these, even in a clear night and under a brilliant moon, because the western side of Olivet abounds in deserted tombs and caves, and, instead of a voluntary surrender on his part, they had reason to suppose that he would endeavor to escape, or secrete himself. Soldiers (some of the Roman cohort took part in the apprehension) would be likely to think of that possibility, and to provide for it.

#### OBJECTION OF GIBBON AND OTHERS.

An impression prevails somewhat extensively that Palestine is no longer distinguished for the fertility which the sacred writers ascribe to that country. The question has been asked me again and again whether I found my expectations in that respect realized; whether the disparaging remarks of certain travelers, in regard to the character of the soil, have any proper foundation. Some, taking it for granted that the praises which the Bible bestows on the promised land, as so remarkably rich and fertile, will not apply to its present state, would account for the change as the effect of a special ordinance of Heaven; they suppose that a curse rests upon it on account of the apostasy of the Jews, causing the needed rains to be withheld, and destroying the productive energy of the soil. Others, less concerned for the

truth of the sacred writers, allege that the facts in the case discredit their testimony; that they must have made a false or exaggerated statement. Gibbon speaks of Palestine as a territory scarcely superior to Wales, either in fertility or extent.\* He employs this comparison, no doubt, says M. Guizot, with the intention of attacking the authority of the Bible. Voltaire indulged in sarcasm on the same subject. As my journey fell within a part of the year when one has a good opportunity to judge of the natural advantages of the country, it may be proper for me to devote a few words to this objection.

## SOURCES OF THE ERROR.

It is not difficult to account for the origin of the adverse representation under remark, and the best way to show how far it is from justifying any impeachment of the truth of Scripture may be, perhaps, to trace the error to its sources. Some misinterpret the import of the expressions used on this subject. One of the most common of these, and, probably, the strongest, is that which so often describes the land of promise as *flowing with milk and honey*. But this is a proverbial way of speaking, and asserts only that the country has eminent advantages for the purposes of agriculture and pasturage. It does not ascribe to it every excellence, nor an absolute superiority to all other lands in any one respect. Yet, not a few entertain this exaggerated idea of

\* See Note in Milman's edition of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Paris, 1840), Vol. I., p. 22.

the meaning. All that the language properly implies is emphatically true. The flocks and herds of Palestine are still numerous, and, with suitable care, might be increased to almost any extent. The Syrian sheep are inferior to no others in the world. During the wars in the early part of this century the European nations sent to that region for their supplies, in part, for subsisting their armies. It has been judged that a single plain, that of Esdraelon, between the hills of Samaria on the south, and the last ridges of Lebanon on the north, would yield grain enough, if properly cultivated, to support the entire population at present within the ancient limits of the holy land. Honey is abundant, and the vegetation necessary for producing it thrives on every hand. "I perceived in many places," says Maundrell, "a smell of honey and wax as strong as if one had been in an apiary." The fig-trees and olives rival those of the most favored climes, and the few vines suffered to grow (for the religion of the Mohammedans forbids the use of wine) show a luxuriance unsurpassed elsewhere. Such facts vindicate entirely the truthfulness of the Scripture statement. No expectations which they do not fulfil are warranted by the language of the sacred writers; and, certainly, no other expectations should be taken as the standard of comparison in judging of the accuracy of those writers.

Certain travelers have given undue prominence to the deficiencies of the country, as compared with its advantages. Every land has its sterile parts as well as its productive ones. Even Sicily, though fertile even to a proverb, has its

wastes. Palestine forms no exception to this geographical law. The region around Jerusalem, in particular, exhibits an impressively wild and forbidding appearance. Not a few writers single out such places and describe them at length, without giving any distinct account of the very different character of the rest of the country; and the consequence is that their readers are misled, have a distorted picture presented to them. Or they visit the East after the heat of summer has arrived; when the harvests have been gathered, the streams are dried up, and the earth seems almost as destitute of verdure as if a raging fire had swept over it. It is obvious that the descriptions of writers who confine themselves chiefly to that aspect of the country must make a wrong impression.

Another source of error has been that some have misunderstood the proper signs or conditions of fertility in the East. It is not safe to make our western ideas, in that respect, the rule of judgment there. It is necessary to take into account the different nature of many of the productions, and the different circumstances under which they flourish. Among us, for instance, a stony soil is generally unproductive, and hills which consist mainly of solid rock are useless for cultivation. It is otherwise in Palestine. The stones there, which cover to such an extent the surface of the ground, are of the limestone species, and, being easily broken up by the harrow, or crumbling to pieces of themselves, improve the soil, and become a source of positive wealth to the husbandman. The hills, too, rocky and bleak as they are in

appearance, favor the growth of some of the choicest products of the East. The olive, in particular, applied to so many uses of life, and so profitable as an article of commerce, appears to flourish best in such places, though the soil seems hardly deep enough to cover its roots. Job (29, 6) refers very possibly to this fact when he speaks of the rock as pouring out for him rivers of oil. Vineyards, too, were anciently planted on the sides of the mountains; terraces, for collecting the slight earth required for the purpose, were easily constructed out of the soft limestone, and not seldom existed naturally, in consequence of the regularity of the strata; so that once vines, with their luxuriant verdure and rich fruit, covered the hills from top to bottom, where nothing meets the eye at present but naked rocks, and the reflection of a glaring sunlight. It is a rare thing to pass a mountain, even in the wild parts of Judea, which does not show that it was formerly terraced, and made to flow with oil and wine, though it may exhibit now as perfect an image of dreariness and unproductiveness as can well be imagined. It is not strange, under these circumstances, that some travelers have been misled by a superficial view of the country, and have thus spoken unfavorably of its natural advantages.

Another mistake, which some commit, is, that they fail to distinguish between the uncultivated state of Palestine at present and its natural condition. Its present state results, in a great measure, from the neglect and inefficiency of the inhabitants. The Turkish rule, so unfriendly everywhere to a spirit of industry and enterprise, has wrought out its bad

effects on the largest scale in the holy land. Property is insecure; taxation oppressive; the government monopolizes the best portions of the soil; and, so far as regards the bulk of the people, the ordinary motives to effort and the acquisition of property, have, to a great extent, lost their power. It is a common saying there that the more a farmer raises, the poorer he becomes. It is not difficult to explain this paradox. The government not only lays claim to a liberal proportion of all that is produced, but asserts the right of deciding how much that is, and of receiving its revenue, not in kind, but in money; so that the husbandman, in order to satisfy the wants or rapacity of the ruler, must often pay for more than he has raised, and, at the same time, transport what he has, at great expense, to a distant market, to enable him to obtain the money exacted by the government. Such a system would impoverish and beggar any country on the earth. The effect of it in Syria is, that large tracts, fitted by nature to contribute freely to human sustenance, lie entirely waste. Briers and thorns grow like forests where ample harvests might be reaped with very little labor. Only a few patches are cultivated here and there on the great plain of Esdraelon, and yet, as I have said, it might serve as the granary of the East; the rest is overrun with weeds or turned into a quagmire. The same remark, essentially, may be made in regard to other fertile districts. It must be very incorrect, therefore, to judge of the natural resources of Palestine from what appears there now. Human industry must coöperate always with nature, in order to develop the evidences of

fertility and abundance ; it is the failure of that condition which has made the difference between the ancient home of the Hebrews as it is and as it was once, and might still be.

#### TESTIMONY OF TRAVELERS.

Finally, those who would impugn the truth of Scripture on the ground alluded to, follow a one-sided view of the testimony of travelers on this subject. Not many of them make an unfavorable report of the soil and climate. The great majority of them concur in representing the country as deserving entirely the commendation which it has received. I subjoin a few testimonies to this effect, showing the general impression which a personal survey has made on most of those who have enjoyed that advantage. Josephus, who was born there, remarks that the whole of Galilee was rich, abounding in pastures planted with various kinds of trees, while Samaria and Judea were abundant in their agricultural productions. Palestine was well known to the Romans. Tacitus, though he himself never visited the East, represents the opinion of his countrymen as confirming this eulogistic description. Maundrell says \* that "it is obvious to an observer that the rocks and hills must have been anciently covered with earth and cultivated, and made to contribute to the maintenance of the inhabitants," even more, in fact, than if the country had been level ; because "an uneven surface affords a much larger space for cultivation." Shaw says,†

\* Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 65.

† Travels in Barbary and the Levant, Vol. II., p. 189.

“The holy land, were it as well inhabited and cultivated as formerly, would still be as fruitful. The soil is rich. The barrenness, of which some complain, proceeds from the indolence of the inhabitants; otherwise the land is a good land, and capable of affording supplies of corn and oil as liberally as in the time of Solomon.” Mr. Jowett states, as the result of his remarks, that there “is no fair reason for pronouncing the land naturally unproductive; that under a good government it would again literally *flow with milk and honey*; that the plains, the valleys and the upland slopes, would yield corn for man, and pasturage for innumerable flocks and herds.” \* Speaking of the plain of Jericho, Dr. Robinson says,† “It is certainly one of the richest in the world; enjoying all the rains like the hill-country, and susceptible, besides, of unlimited irrigation from copious fountains. Water is everywhere abundant; the climate propitious; the nature of the soil fertility itself; nothing, in short, is wanting but the hand of man to till the ground.”

## VALLEY OF URTAS.

To the general statements which have been made, it may not be superfluous to add a particular example. The valley of Urtas, the ancient Etam, is near the Pools of Solomon, not far from Bethlehem. It is a somewhat extended, narrow Wady, between opposite hills, which rise up like walls of

\* Christian Researches in the Holy Land (Boston, 1826), p. 226.

† Biblical Researches, Vol. II., p. 304.



rock, in some places five hundred feet high. A part of the enclosed valley has been cultivated for a long time under the supervision of the Greek community at Jerusalem. Another part lay unimproved till recently; the natives had forsaken it, and it had fallen into such neglect as to seem to be utterly sterile and useless. A few years ago, Mr. Meshullam, a converted Jew, at the head of a small agricultural colony, took possession of this apparently barren tract, and attempted to reclaim and cultivate it. He removed the rubbish which choked up the soil, cleared out a spring that had almost disappeared, and obtained from it a supply of water sufficient for irrigating a great part of the valley. The scene is now changed. Fields of grain, when I was there, on the nineteenth and twentieth of April, were growing along the bottom of the Wady. Fruit-trees were coming forward, with every appearance of thrift and vigor. Mr. Meshullam told me, as an instance of the fertility of the land and climate, that he put a peach-stone into the ground in autumn and obtained fruit from it the same year. In addition to the proper products of the East, he has introduced the cultivation of some of our most useful vegetables, and with entire success. He says that five different crops of vegetables, that come on one after another, may be raised on the same field. Nor are the sides of those rocky hills to be neglected. They furnish, he assured me, the best possible situation for planting vines; and he was designing, the next year, to build a row of terraces from the top to the bottom of them, for the cultivation of grapes. All this has taken place in a spot

that would be considered inferior to many parts of the country. What, then, must it have been in its palmy days! What an aspect of beauty and abundance must have greeted the eye when the hand of culture was put forth everywhere to improve and adorn it! What would such a soil and such a climate deny to an industry enjoying the protection of a stable and judicious government? Neglected as the country now is, many a scene passed under my eye, to which I could apply still the words of the Psalmist:

“Thou (O God) visitest the earth and enrichest it ;  
 Thou dost *abundantly* enrich it ;  
 The river of God is full of water.  
 Thou providest their corn when thou hast so prepared it (the earth ;)   
 Her furrows thou dost water.  
 Thou dost level her ridges ;  
 With large drops of rain thou dost cause the earth to flow ;  
 Her springing thou dost bless.  
 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness,  
 And thy paths drop fatness.  
 They drop fatness on the pastures of the wilderness,  
 And with rejoicing the hills gird themselves.  
 Clothed are the pastures with flocks,  
 And the valleys are covered over with corn ;  
 They shout for joy ; yea, they sing.”\*

\* I have availed myself of a translation of this passage from the pen of the lamented B. B. Edwards, late Professor in the Theological Seminary at Andover. I cannot write his name without emotions of sad but tender interest. The journey to which these pages relate ~~was~~ one which we had planned to execute together ; it had been the sub-

ject of many conversations between us, and of long cherished desire on both sides. How much more useful and delightful would it have been in the society of such a friend ! His failing health obliged him to relinquish the undertaking at the last moment, though not without a hope that he should live to accomplish it at a future time. It was otherwise appointed. It was my privilege to receive a letter from him, just before leaving the holy land, in which, with a touching allusion to his disappointment, he requested that, "as I plucked a leaf or gathered a flower here and there, I would lay aside one, also, for him ;" and in a week from that time, on arriving at Smyrna, I heard that he had been called away to his rest in heaven. He died at Athens, in Georgia, on the 20th of April, 1852. The impression of his character, so unique in its combination of modesty and sterling worth, and of his various intellectual endowments and attainments, will never be forgotten by those who knew him. The Memoir of his Life and Labors, so worthily prepared by his friend and colleague, the Rev. Dr. Park, will cause him to be remembered in future times. He was so long associated with all my anticipations of eastern travel, and was so constantly present with me in thought during the journey, that I have desired, not for his sake but mine, to record his name on the pages of this humble memorial of our common enterprise.

## CHAPTER IV.

### AGRICULTURE, ITS OPERATIONS AND IMPLEMENTS.

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#### TURNING THE RIVERS OF WATER.

Just before leaving the cultivated part of Egypt, we halted one day in the vicinity of some gardens of vegetables, through which the water was conveyed by means of little channels or trenches, two or three inches deep. They could be formed in the soft earth very easily and expeditiously; and were carried in this direction or that, as the wants of the plantation required. Thus the gardener had the streams which flowed in these trenches entirely under his control, and could turn them this way or that, as he pleased. It was this mode of irrigation, beyond doubt, which gave rise to the comparison in Proverbs 21, 1: "As the rivers," or, more properly, "channels of water, so is the heart of the king in the hand of Jehovah; he turneth it whithersoever he will."

#### WATERING WITH THE FOOT.

I watched attentively to observe whether the gardener used his foot, in any instance, for the purpose of breaking

down the edges of the trenches, when he wished to change the direction of the current. He did not, however, as far as I noticed, resort to that expedient (he employed a light hoe); though it was obvious that he could have done so with entire ease, and I cannot doubt that it is a common mode of accomplishing the object. Several writers speak of having seen the water conducted thus from one channel to another, under the guidance of the foot of the husbandman. Thus Dr. Shaw says,\* that the Egyptians plant their various sorts of pulse in rills, and that when they water them, "they stand ready, as occasion requires, to stop and divert the torrent, by turning the earth against it with the foot, and opening, at the same time, with a mattock, a new track to receive it." This practice may be the one to which allusion is made in Deuteronomy 11, 10, where the subject of remark is the comparative superiority of Palestine to Egypt. "The land whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowest thy seed and waterest it with thy foot as a garden of herbs; but is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven." The passage does not refer necessarily to the original sources of obtaining water, as some have said, but to the supply being so insufficient as to oblige the Egyptians to use the most painstaking economy in applying the water which they had.

But many prefer a different explanation of the phrase,

\* Travels in Barbary and the Levant, Vol. II., p. 267.

“watering with the foot.” Cruden states it as follows:\*

“A wheel is employed, which a man turns with the motion of his feet, by ascending successively the several steps which are attached to it. But, since while he is thus turning the wheel he cannot preserve his position, he holds a stay in his hands, which is not movable, and thus supports himself. So that in this work the hands do the office of the feet, and the feet that of the hands; since the hands, which should act, are at rest, and the feet, which should be at rest, are in action and give motion to the wheel.” Philo describes such a wheel, and some modern travelers speak of its continued use in Egypt. Niebuhr † gives a drawing of a machine very similar to it, but says that he saw only one in Egypt, though he afterwards found it common in India. I do not recollect to have seen it. Wheels for raising the water of the Nile are very common, but turned generally by oxen or camels. Mr. Lane, in his work on the Modern Egyptians, speaks at some length of the different ways of raising water, but says nothing of the foot-wheel.

#### THE EASTERN PLOUGH.

This article is differently made from what is customary among us. It is lightly built, and constructed with the least possible outlay of skill or expense. It consists of two poles, which cross each other at the ends near the ground. The pole turned towards the oxen is fastened to the yoke, and

\* Concordance, under the word “Foot.”

† Beschreibung nach Arabien, &c., Vol. I., p. 148.

draws the implement; the one turned towards the driver serves, at one extremity, as a ploughshare, and at the other as a handle. I first saw this plough in use in the neighborhood of Gaza, the country of the Philistines. I often saw the peasants breaking up the soil, and always with a plough having but one handle. The fashion of it recalled to my mind the manner in which the Saviour has expressed himself in reference to the inconstant, faithless disciple. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven," (Luke 9, 62.) It was interesting to remark this instance of exact conformity to oriental habits. Had the plough in that country been made as ours is made, the language would have been, "No man, having put his *hands* to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven." A learned commentator, uninformed in regard to this point, would be apt to talk of a grammatical figure here, of an exchange of the plural for the singular, for the sake of a more definite expression. Some diversity in the construction of the plough may be expected to be found in different parts of the land; but the prevailing form, as I infer both from what I observed and from the testimony of others, is that described above.

As the soil is generally thin, and the plough so light, the machine glides rapidly over the surface; and, unless the laborer, therefore, keeps his eye fixed on it, the plough is liable to slip aside, without breaking up the earth at all. The Saviour's illustration implies the necessity of such vigilance, and is founded on the circumstance here mentioned. The

calling of the Christian requires singleness of aim, decision, perseverance; and he who fails to exert these qualities, though he may seem to have taken some of the first steps in the path to heaven, will never reach that blessed world.

The plough is drawn by oxen, sometimes by camels, and, also, by cows and heifers. I saw all these animals employed, at different times, in this branch of agriculture. This use of heifers in ploughing is recognized as an ancient practice in Judges 14, 18.

#### OX-GOAD.

As the driver of the team employs but one hand in holding the plough, the other hand is at liberty for carrying a goad. This is a very different affair from our ox-goad. Maundrell, who had the curiosity to measure several of these goads, found them to be "about eight feet long, and at the biggest end six inches in circumference. They were armed at the lesser end with a sharp pricker for driving the oxen, and at the other end with a small spade or paddle of iron, strong and massy, for cleansing the plough from the clay that encumbers it in working."\* He speaks of those which he saw in the north of Syria; those that I saw in the south I should judge to be quite as large. It is manifest that such an instrument, wielded by a strong arm, would do no mean execution. It is easy, therefore, to credit the account of Shamgar's achievement, who made such havoc among his enemies with an ox-goad. See Judges 3, 31. We may suppose, however (so fragmentary is the notice), that he was

\* Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 110.

not entirely alone; that some others rallied to his aid with such implements of labor as they could snatch at the moment.

#### A PROVERB OF THE HEBREWS.

The beam and yoke of the plough are so short that the driver, standing behind the oxen, is able to reach them with his long goad. Hence, as he stands there, and applies his goad from that position, for the purpose of directing his team, a refractory animal would naturally kick against the sharp iron when pierced with it. Out of this fact arose the proverb so aptly quoted in the narrative of Paul's conversion: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goads;" that is, his opposition to the cause and will of Christ must be unavailing; his continuance of it would serve only to bring injury and ruin on himself. See Acts 26, 14. The same proverb was current among the Greeks and Romans; for in early times they used a plough of the like construction, which they directed with one hand, while they held the goad with the other.

#### TREADING OF GRAPES.

A missionary friend, stationed at Aleppo, whom I met at Beirut, informed me that the ancient practice of treading out grapes with the feet still lingers among the mountains of Lebanon. The Koran discourages the cultivation of the vine, and hence this operation is by no means so common a sight as it was when the Jews had possession of the country. He described to me the ordinary process as follows. A hol-

low place, usually a rock, is scooped out, considerably deeper at one end than the other. The grapes are put into this trough, and two or more persons, with naked feet and legs, get into it, where they jump up and down, crushing the fruit as they trample on it, while, to enliven their labor, they often sing at the same time. The juice flows into the lower part of the excavation. It was mentioned that the place for treading out the grapes is sometimes dug in the ground, lined, probably, with a coating of stone or brick. The expression in Matthew 21, 33, "and he digged a wine-press" in his vineyard, may allude to such an excavation; though some think that it refers to a trough in the earth, for receiving the liquor from a foot-press placed over it.

As the treaders go on with their work the grapes are liable to break or burst, with an explosive noise, and to bespatter them with the blood-red juice from head to foot. Some of the grapes, after this process, need to be pressed still more. For this purpose a board is placed on them, and a heavy stone screwed down upon it by means of a lever. Such, no doubt, was the ancient wine-press, in its rudest form.

But, from the nature of the case, we should not expect here a rigid conformity to any one model. Dr. Robinson describes a wine-press which he saw at Hebleh, near the site of Antipatris (Acts 23, 31), which was hewn out of a rock and divided into two parts. The upper and more shallow part was the place where the grapes were put, the

\* Bibliotheca Sacra, 1853, p. 24.

lower and deeper one was the place for receiving the liquid pressed out of them. It was a work, no doubt, of the ancient Hebrews or Philistines; since this part of the land passed alternately from the hands of one race to the other. No vineyards exist in that region at the present time. Dr. Chandler,\* writing from Smyrna, speaks of a wine-press which he saw there of a different fashion still. "The vintage had now begun; the juice of the grapes was pressed out for the wine; a man, with feet and legs bare, was treading the fruit in a kind of cistern, with a hole or vent near the bottom, and a vessel underneath to receive the liquor"

Some of the most beautiful as well as sublime imagery of the sacred writers is derived from this sphere of rural life among the Hebrews. The following are some of the passages which exemplify this remark. Isaiah (63, 1, sq.) says, with an allusion to those who tread the wine-press, and are stained with the juice of the grapes,

"Who is this that cometh from Edom,  
With dyed garments from Bozrah?  
This that is glorious in his apparel,  
Traveling in the greatness of his strength?"

The answer is,

"It is I, who speak in righteousness,  
Mighty to save."

Again, the interrogator asks,

\* Cited in Cobbin's Oriental Bible.

“ Why is thy raiment red,  
And thy garments like him who treads the wine-press ? ”

The answer is,

“ The wine-press trod I alone,  
And of the nations no one was with me ;  
And I trod them in my anger,  
And trampled them in my fury ;  
So that their blood was sprinkled on my garments,  
And all my raiment I have stained. ”

The same prophet (16, 10) announces the fall of Moab, thus:

“ Taken away is joy and gladness from the garden,  
And in the vineyards shall they not sing nor rejoice.  
In the wine-presses the treader shall not tread ;  
The vintage-shout I have hushed. ”

Jeremiah (25, 30) has in view the same festive scene :

“ He shall roar mightily against his habitation ;  
A vintage-cry, like that of grape-treaders,  
Shall he take up against all the inhabitants of the earth. ”

For another similar description see Jeremiah 58, 33. Language derived from the wine-press is applied often in a figurative manner. Thus, the pressing out of the blood-red juice of the grape denotes the slaughter or punishment of the wicked. This is the origin of the awful representation in Revelation 14, 19. 20. The prophet Joel (3, 13) had already expressed himself to the same effect :

“ Put forth the sickle ; for ripe is the harvest.

Come, tread ; for full is the press.

Overflowing are the vats ; for great is their wickedness.”

#### THRESHING-FLOORS.

I was not in Palestine late enough to witness the act of threshing, but, as I passed through the country, I had several places pointed out to me, said to be used for that purpose. The threshing-floors are simply plots of ground in the open air, a few rods in extent, smoothed off and beaten hard. Sometimes a broad stone, projecting slightly above the ground, forms the area of the floor wholly or in part. The rocky bottom of the lower Pool of Gihon, on the west of Jerusalem, no longer employed as a reservoir, affords a convenient place for threshing, and, as I was told, in the time of harvest is applied to that use. The top or side of a hill is often preferred, for the purpose of having the benefit of the wind. Most of the floors that fell under my notice were on high ground. On the plain of Akka I passed a singular mound, apparently artificial, supposed to have been thrown up there by the crusaders for military purposes. Those who cultivate the neighboring fields resort thither to thresh their grain. The threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, which David purchased for the erection of an altar, was on the summit of Mount Moriah, (1 Chronicles 21, 15, sq.) That the Hebrews, like the present inhabitants of the East, left their floors uncovered, we learn incidentally from the account of Gideon's fleece. “Behold,” he said, “I will put a fleece of wool on the floor ; and if the dew be on the fleece only,

and it be dry upon all the earth besides, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said," (Judges 6, 37.)

#### THRESHING MACHINE.

At Beirut I sought out a mechanic's shop, in order to see a threshing instrument, described to me as used generally in that part of Syria, and as similar to that of the ancient inhabitants. The frame was composed of thick pieces of plank, turned up in front like our stone-sledge, and perforated with holes underneath for holding the teeth. The teeth consisted of pieces of sharp basaltic rock, about three inches long, and hardly less firm than iron itself. This machine is drawn over the grain by horses or oxen, and serves, together with the trampling of the feet of the animals, to beat out the kernels and cut up the straw, preparatory to winnowing. It is to an instrument of this description that the prophet alludes, when he says: "Behold, I will make thee" (that is, the Jewish nation) "as a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff," (Isaiah 41, 15.) The teeth were sometimes made of iron, as appears from Amos 1, 3.

#### WINNOWING SHOVEL.

The modern Greeks, in many of their customs, approach nearer to the oriental nations than to those of Western Europe. Not far from the site of ancient Corinth, I passed a heap of grain, which some laborers were employed in winnowing. They used, for throwing up the mingled wheat and

chaff, a three-pronged wooden fork, having a handle three or four feet long. Like this, no doubt, was the "fan," or winnowing shovel, which John the Baptist represents Christ as bearing, in token of the purifying power of his doctrine: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he shall thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner." See Matthew 3, 12 and Luke 3, 17. Isaiah (30, 24) and Jeremiah (15, 7) refer to this implement. Those who have been in Syria later in the season say that such a fork is still used there for throwing up the grain against the wind, in separating it from the chaff.

#### LODGES IN THE FIELDS.

Booths or lodges are still seen in gardens or fields, under which the keeper sits to protect his fruits from the depredation to which they are exposed from mischievous animals or thieves. I noticed them on different occasions. They are built of branches and leaves, interwoven so as to exclude the sun, or of pieces of mat, thrown loosely over a low framework of poles. They are merely large enough to shelter a single person. During the part of the year when the fruits are ripening, and, consequently, are in most danger of being destroyed or stolen, it is customary to maintain a watch uninterruptedly by day and night. To see one of these miserable sheds, standing alone in the midst of a field, or on the margin of it, occupied by its solitary tenant, presents to the eye a striking image of dreariness and desolation. Hence, the prophet Isaiah (1, 8), when he would represent the territory of Judah as comparatively waste, depopulated, says that the

land, "the daughter of Zion, should be left as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." It adds to the significance of the figure that the watcher is often a decrepit or aged person; since the employment requires but little exertion beyond that of giving the alarm in case of danger, and the more robust and active are needed for other labors.

We have an allusion to the same subject in Job 27, 16, sq.:

"He builds like the moth his house,  
And like the booth which the watcher has made."

This is said of the rich man, who has heaped up wealth by dishonest means; the fabric which he rears on such a foundation shall not endure; his prosperity, like a booth that stands for a few brief months, shall soon pass away.

"Though he heap up silver as dust,  
And procure raiment as clay;  
He may procure it, but the just shall wear it,  
And the innocent divide the silver."

#### WATCH-TOWERS.

The watch-towers have the same general object as the lodges, but are confined chiefly to vineyards and orchards, and are built in a more substantial manner. They are so peculiar in their appearance, that it appears to me strange, in looking back to the occurrence, that I did not recognize them at first sight. They caught my attention first as I was approaching Bethlehem, from the south-east. They appeared in almost every field within sight from that direc-

tion; they were circular in shape, fifteen or twenty feet high, and, being built of stones, looked, at a distance, like a little forest of obelisks. I was perplexed for some time to decide what they were; my traveling companions were equally at fault. Suddenly, in a lucky moment, the words crossed my mind, "A certain man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country," (Mark 12, 1.) This recollection cleared up the mystery. There, before my eyes, stood the towers of which I had so often read and thought; such as stood there when David led forth his flocks to the neighboring pastures; such as furnished to the sacred writers and the Saviour himself so many illustrations for enforcing what they taught.

These towers are said to be sometimes square in form, as well as round, and as high as forty or fifty feet. Those which I examined had a small door near the ground, and a level space on the top, where a man could sit and command a view of the plantation. I afterwards saw a great many of these structures near Hebron, where the vine still flourishes in its ancient home; for there, probably, was Eshcol, whence the Hebrew spies returned to Joshua, with the clusters of grapes which they had gathered as evidence of the fertility of the land. Some of the towers here are so built as to serve as houses; and, during the vintage, it is said that the inhabitants of Hebron take up their abode in them in such numbers as to leave the town almost deserted. A passage in one of the Gospels shows that the erection of the tower involved

often great expense. "Which of you," says Christ, "intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" To say of a man that "he began to build, and was not able to finish," was equivalent to pronouncing him short-sighted, improvident, reckless. See Luke 14, 28—30.

#### PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

Here at Hebron I was struck with the singular care with which the vine-dressers had picked out the stones from the fields and heaped them up, so as to form an enclosure around the vineyards. The prophet Isaiah, in his parable of the vineyard (5, 1, sq.), brings forward this circumstance as a trait of the ancient husbandry. The beautiful illustration which he employs includes so many particulars connected with the cultivation of the vine among the Hebrews, and still retained in the East, that I may be allowed to quote here so pertinent a passage.

" My friend had a vineyard  
On the summit of a fruitful hill ;  
And he dug 'it up, and freed it from stones,  
And planted it with a noble vine ;  
And built a tower in the midst of it,  
And also hewed out a wine-press in it ;  
And he expected that it would bring forth grapes,  
But it brought forth worthless ones.

" Hear now, and I will make known to you  
What I purpose to do to my vineyard.

I will take away its hedge, and it shall be devoured ;  
I will destroy its wall, and it shall be trodden down ;  
And I will make it a desolation.  
It shall not be pruned nor digged,  
But shall grow up with thorns and briers."

#### HEDGES.

The vine-dresser, in the extract which precedes, threatens to "take away the hedge" which surrounded the unprofitable vineyard. I have not yet spoken of this mode of protection. In addition to a stone-wall, or as a substitute for it, the eastern vineyards have often a hedge of thorns around them. A common plant for this purpose is the prickly pear, a species of cactus, which grows several feet high, and as thick as a man's body, armed with sharp thorns, and thus forming an almost impervious defence. The Saviour speaks of such a hedge as planted around the vineyard which was leased to the unjust husbandmen, (Mark 12, 1.) He refers to it, also, though less directly, in the parable of the supper: "The lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in;" that is, Go out into the more public ways, and the narrow paths which run between the hedges that separate the vineyards and gardens from one another. See Luke 14, 23.

#### THE ANCIENT LANDMARK.

In proceeding from Anata to Neby Samuil, places which I have mentioned already,\* we left the beaten path and struck

\* See the 75th and 82d pages.

across the cultivated fields, for the purpose of shortening the distance. We encountered no obstruction in doing this; for though the gardens and vineyards are usually surrounded by a stone wall or hedge of prickly pear, the grain fields, on the contrary, though they belong to different proprietors, are not separated by any enclosure from each other. The boundary between them is indicated by heaps of small stones, or sometimes by single upright stones, placed at intervals of a rod or more from each other. This is the ancient landmark of which we read in the Old Testament. The fields through which we passed at this time were divided off from each other in this manner.

It is obvious that a dishonest man could remove these stones a few feet, without its being readily perceived, and thus enlarge his own field by encroaching on that of another. It is with reference to this species of dishonesty that Moses says (Deuteronomy 27, 17), "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark, and all the people shall say, Amen." So in Deuteronomy 19, 14, "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's boundary which they of old time have established;" and in Proverbs 22, 28, "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set up."

This mode of dividing one field from another explains, also, the peculiar phraseology in Ruth 2, 3. It was the lot of Ruth, it is said there, "to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz;" that is, it was an open, cultivated tract of country where she went to glean, and the particular part of

it to which her steps were directed was a part that belonged to her kinsman.

#### SEED BY THE ROAD-SIDE.

The ordinary roads or paths in the East lead often along the edge of the fields, which are unenclosed, as described in the last article. Hence, as the sower scatters his seed, some of it is liable to fall beyond the ploughed portion, on the hard, beaten ground, which forms the way-side. This circumstance explains a trait in the parable of the sower, to which we have nothing corresponding in our usages. See Matthew 13, 3, sq.: "A sower went forth to sow: and, as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." Hence, too, we find it related that on a certain Sabbath the Saviour and his disciples "passed through the corn-fields;" not that they trampled down the grain, as the expression might suggest if understood according to our ideas, but that they followed one of those paths, which bounded the fields, where the grain stood within reach as they went along.

#### COMPLAINT OF THE PHARISEES.

The other incident mentioned in the same connection, namely, that of their plucking the ears of wheat, rubbing out the kernels in their hands, and eating them (Luke 6, 1), is one which the traveler sees often at present who is in Palestine at the time of the gathering of the harvest. Dr. Robinson relates the following case. "Our Arabs were an hungry, and, going into the fields, they plucked the ears of corn

and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. On being questioned, they said this was an old custom, and no one would speak against it; they were supposed to be hungry, and it was allowed as a charity."\* The Pharisees complained of the disciples for violating the Sabbath, and not any rights of property.

#### SHUNNING THE PUBLIC WAYS.

The unenclosed state of the country rendering it possible to move so easily from one place to another, to go, if I may so express it, almost anywhere, any way, recalls a statement in Judges 5, 6, of which it illustrates the meaning. It is said that "in the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, the highways were unoccupied, and the travelers walked through byways." The times were times of anarchy and insecurity. Robbers infested the country. Those who had occasion to journey, in order to escape being waylaid and plundered, found it necessary to shun the customary roads, and pursue their way through the fields, where the absence of walls and fences enabled them to pass without special difficulty, whether on foot or with animals.

#### NARROW PATHS.

In the vicinity of Beit Hanina, a village near Jerusalem, we passed through several narrow paths which lay between the stone walls enclosing the noble vineyards and orchards which exist there. We were obliged to advance in single file; the space was hardly large enough to allow the horse

\* Biblical Researches, Vol. II., p. 192.

or donkey with his rider to proceed ; and even then some caution was needed to prevent the feet from being crushed against the projecting stones. We were reminded of Balaam's adventure. It may have been in some such pass as this that the prophet found himself hedged up, where his mule could neither advance nor turn aside, because an unseen adversary obstructed his way.

## CHAPTER V.

### GEOGRAPHICAL ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE.

UNDER this title I propose to mention some instances in which the observations of the traveler in Palestine enable him to verify the accuracy of the sacred writers in the geographical notices and local allusions which occur on almost every page of the Bible. The subject is an extensive one, and admits of a limited illustration only within the compass of a work like the present. I shall restrict myself to a few examples of an incidental character, which stand in some special relation to my own journey.

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#### VALUE OF SUCH ACCURACY.

Before entering on my immediate object here, I would premise a remark or two respecting the value of this agreement between the Scriptures and the geography of the holy land, as a testimony to the truth of the Bible. Regarded in the light of such testimony, it has both a negative and a positive side. It not only frees the Bible from a class of objections which might be and have been urged against its claims to veracity, but, in so far as the agreement can be

shown to be obviously unstudied, incidental, it furnishes a direct proof of the truthful character of the sacred Word.

The following supposition will illustrate this statement: We read in the book of Genesis that when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire from heaven, Abraham was dwelling in his tent by the oaks of Mamre, near Hebron, (Genesis 18, 1.) On the morning after that awful catastrophe, it is said that "he looked toward" the site of those cities, "and all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace," (Genesis 19, 28.) Suppose travelers now had returned from the East, saying that the region of the Dead Sea is not visible from the neighborhood of Hebron, and that Abraham, therefore, could never have seen any rising smoke from that position, what a shock would this give to our confidence in the Bible! Every one feels that such a representation, if true, would encumber the Scriptures with a serious difficulty. If such errors are to be found in them, if the writers betray such ignorance of the relative situation of the places which they mention, they would incur the suspicion of having recorded not facts but inventions of their own, or mythic traditions in which they could no longer distinguish the true and the false from each other. If convicted of mistakes here, who could resist the impression that they may be fallible also as religious teachers, and thus forfeit the character from which they claim their authority over the faith and consciences of men? Hence, to show that objections of this nature have no proper foundation subserves a two-fold pur-

pose ; it turns back one of the weapons with which opposers have assailed the truth of the Scriptures, and, at the same time, strengthens our confidence in them as authentic, reliable, and capable of receiving fresh confirmation from the results of all true progress in investigation and knowledge.

I presented just now an imaginary case, for the purpose of illustration. I return to that to say that the geography of the Pentateuch, so far from being involved in any contradiction by what is said of Abraham on the occasion referred to, is confirmed entirely by the testimony of eye-witnesses. From the height which overlooks Hebron, where Abraham stood, as he beheld the proof that the guilty cities had perished, the observer at the present day has an extensive view spread out before him towards the Dead Sea. The hills of Moab, sloping down towards that sea on the east, and a part of Idumea, are all in sight. A cloud of smoke rising from the plain would be visible to a person at Hebron now, and could have been, therefore, to Abraham, as he looked toward Sodom on the morning after its destruction by Jehovah.

I pass now from these preliminary remarks to the proper subject of this chapter of the book.

#### NOTICE OF BETHEL.

I spent the night of the twenty-eighth of April at Beitin, the Bethel, in Jacob's history, where he saw the vision of the ladder, with the angels ascending and descending upon it. This village is about twelve miles north of Jerusalem. A brief notice is due to a place of so much interest. The

village now there, which has succeeded to the ancient one, stands on the declivity of a hill which slopes towards the south. The highway which led from Judea to Galilee runs a little to the west, and a narrow valley, extremely fertile, lies on the east. Bethel is first mentioned in Genesis 12, 8.

As Abraham stopped there once and again in his pastoral migrations, we may infer that he found the country well adapted to grazing purposes. It answers to that description still. I do not recollect to have seen anywhere so many herds of cattle, and of such fine appearance, as I saw in this particular region. The basin of an immense reservoir still remains at the foot of the hill; the southern wall of which is quite perfect, though the other parts are more or less broken or have disappeared.\* No one can see this ruin, and doubt that it belongs to an early Hebrew age; for the size and peculiar shape of the stones afford decisive proof of such an origin. A small pool of water was standing at the east end of the reservoir, in which the frogs were croaking in a lively manner. Two living springs, also, issue from the ground, to which females from the village came down, from time to time, and filled their pitchers. The other ruins there are of a mixed character. Some have thought that they could distinguish among them the remains of churches and military towers built by the crusaders, as well as single stones and heaps of rubbish, which may date back to Jewish times.

\* The dimensions of the tank are given as three hundred and fourteen feet in length, and two hundred and seventeen feet in breadth.

## PARTING OF ABRAHAM AND LOT.

We encamped for the night within the enclosure of the old reservoir. It was my privilege on that evening to bow the knee, and invoke the protection of God, where Jacob of old lodged as a wayfarer, and vowed "that if God would be with him, and would keep him in the way that he should go, and cause him to come again to his father's house in peace, then the Lord should be his God," and he would serve him more perfectly, (Genesis 28, 16, sq.) While the men were putting up the tent and preparing for the evening meal, I went to an eminence within sight, on the east, to examine the ruins of a fortress and a church, which are found there. From this height I had a distinct view of the Jordan over the tops of the intervening hills, and could trace its course for some considerable distance, north and south, by means of the rich verdure which lined its margin on both sides. In one place I thought I could see a white foam or spray, as if the current was broken by some obstruction. In this opinion I was probably correct, for Lieutenant Lynch, who floated down the Jordan, from the Lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea, ascertained that the river, in its intermediate course, rushes over not fewer than twenty-seven violent rapids, in addition to many others which are less precipitous.

As I stood surveying this scene, I must have been near the spot where Abraham and Lot parted from each other, as related in the thirteenth chapter of Genesis. Abraham, it is

said, on his return from Egypt, "pitched his tent between Bethel and Hai." This latter place can be shown to have been, in all probability, near the modern Deir Diwan, which was conspicuous from where I stood, a little to the south-east of Beitin, or Bethel. Hence, my position here was "between Bethel and Hai," which the sacred narrative designates as the place where Abraham encamped. We are told that the possessions of the patriarch had become great; he "was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold." So, also, Lot, "who went with him, had flocks and herds and tents." To procure, therefore, an ampler range of pasturage, and to put an end to the quarrels which had begun to arise between their respective herdsmen, Abraham proposed to Lot that they should separate, and dwell in different parts of the land. Hear the venerable Sheikh's magnanimous offer. "Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Now follows the circumstance which shows how quietly but rigidly the narrative adjusts itself to the external situation of the parties. "And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere \* \* even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the other." It is to be remarked, now, that it is not by any means at every point not more remote from the Jordan than this eminence "between Bethel and

Hai," that the traveler, as he pursues his journey northward, obtains a view of the river and its fields. Higher ground may intervene to cut off the prospect. Then, again, the appearance of the valley of the Jordan, where it comes into sight from some particular place, may be, not that of a fertile, inviting region, but unproductive, forbidding.\* Just here, on the contrary, a little to the east of Bethel, the eye rests at this moment upon exactly such a scene as Lot is represented as beholding when he selected "the plain of the Jordan" as the place of his residence.† There is the river gleaming over the hill-tops; there are the broad meadows visible on either bank; and the waving line of verdure which marks the course of the stream I cannot better describe than by saying, after the example of the sacred writer, that it reminds one, though certainly much less imposing, of the rich fields fertilized by the Nile, as the beholder looks down upon them from the great pyramid near Cairo. The valley of the Jordan, as seen here, lies "east" from Bethel; precisely the direction in which Lot moved, after making choice of that region as his future home.

I cannot expect to excite in the reader's mind the interest which such an observation excited in my own. It may be

\* As to the varying aspects of the valley of the Jordan, though in the main exceedingly fertile, the reader will find definite information in Lynch's account of his voyage from the Lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea.

† The catastrophe of Sodom and Gomorrah altered the character of the southern part of the valley; but there is no reason to suppose that it affected the part north of the Dead Sea.

necessary that one should stand on the spot and survey the landscape with his own eyes, in order to perceive the full effect of such a confirmation of the truth of the Bible ; but surely no one who has done so, — who has traversed the country and observed how its minutest geographical features are reflected back to us in the Scriptures, — can doubt that the writers lived amid the scenes which they describe, and have interwoven in their narratives so many accurate allusions to them, because truth, always consistent with itself, was their guide.

#### BATTLE-FIELD OF SAUL AND THE PHILISTINES.

My pilgrimage brought me, in the forenoon of May first, to Jenin, on the southern border of the plain of Esdraelon. This village, having a population of some two thousand, may be the modern representative of En-Ganim, which existed at the time of the Hebrew conquest, (Joshua 19, 21 ; 21, 29.) It is certainly the *Ginæa* of Josephus, who mentions it as one of the boundaries between Samaria and Galilee. Here we halted about two hours, under the shade of a wide-spreading mulberry-tree, by the side of a beautiful stream which flows westward through the plain, and swells the waters of the Kishon, near the sea. At noon, just as the muezzin, or crier, was heard from the balcony of the minaret, calling the faithful to prayers, we resumed our march, and launched forth upon the magnificent plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel.\* This plain stretches (leaving out of view some minor irregularities) from the Mediterranean, between Akka

\* Jezreel is the Hebrew, Esdraelon the Greek, form of the name.

on the north and the head of Carmel on the south, across the country, with an average width of ten or twelve miles, to the river Jordan on the east. It forms a break down between the mountains of Lebanon on the north and those of Samaria on the south. It is, for the most part, quite level, with only slight undulations here and there. Of its fertility I have already spoken in another place.\* This plain has been a battle-field of the most sanguinary dye from the days of Barak to Napoleon, who, with a handful of French, defeated here a large Turkish army. Dr. Clark, the traveler, observes in just, as well as beautiful, language, that "warriors out of every nation which is under heaven have pitched their tents in the Plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the dews of Tabor and of Hermon."† An isolated ridge of rocky heights extends from the direction of the Jordan into this valley towards the west, which is the Gilboa of Scripture; a name which David's touching elegy on Saul and Jonathan will preserve forever in the memory of mankind. The words of the sad lament linger still upon our ears.

"Ye mountains of Gilboa !

Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,

Nor fields of offerings ;

For there was cast away the shield of the mighty,

The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed.

\* See on the 142d page.

† Travels, &c., Vol. II., p. 499.

From the blood of the slain, from the flesh of the mighty,  
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
The sword of Saul returned not in vain.

“Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,  
And in their death they were not divided.  
They were swifter than eagles,  
They were stronger than lions.

“Daughters of Israel ! weep for them.  
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !  
O, Jonathan ! slain upon thy mountains  
Woe is me for thee — my brother Jonathan !

“How are the mighty fallen !  
And the weapons of war perished !”

The account of the battle, which resulted in the death of the Hebrew king, not only mentions the general scene of the action, but embraces the names of several places, which are introduced as sustaining not vague, but altogether definite, complicated relations to each other. If these places, now, can be identified still, and if the connections between them implied in the narrative are found to be entirely natural, and appropriate to the events referred to them, may we not reasonably adduce this agreement as a corroboration of the Scripture history ?

The following summary recapitulates the events as far as the present object requires. The combatants in the battle, which proved so disastrous to Saul, lay encamped, at first, the Israelites on Gilboa, the Philistines at Shunem. They appear subsequently to have changed their position ; the

Israelites are said to have pitched their tents at a fountain near Jezreel, and the Philistines at Aphek. On the night before the battle Saul proceeded to Endor to consult a sorceress respecting the event of the approaching conflict; it is implied that he rejoined his army after an absence of a few hours only. The final encounter took place on Gilboa, and the Philistines, who were the conquerors, having found the dead body of Saul among the slain, carried it to Bethshean, and hung it up on the walls of the city. All these places, now, if the narrative be true, must have been near each other; must have been so situated as to admit of the rapid movements, hither and thither, which the complications of a battle involve, and some of them, at least, as we may presume, afforded to the parties certain military advantages, leading them to select just these positions rather than others. The question arises, then, Does an inspection of the scene where the contest between Saul and the Philistines is said to have occurred verify these conditions? Have the names of the places outlived the revolutions of so many ages, and does their present situation agree with the circumstances under which the sacred writer has introduced them?

I venture to affirm that a person who compares the Bible account of this battle with the region around Gilboa, has the same sort (if not degree) of evidence that the account relates what is true, that a person would have that such battles as those of Saratoga, Yorktown or Waterloo, really took place, who should compare the current histories of those achievements with the places where they were performed. Gilboa,

as the name of a hamlet on the ridge of mountains anciently known under that appellation, as well as Jezreel, Shunem, Endor, Bethshean, are all found still bearing the same names.\* They lie almost within sight of each other. A person can start from any one of them and make the circuit of them all in a few hours. Aphek is the only one of the cluster not yet identified. Jezreel is on the northern slope of Gilboa, and at the distance of twenty minutes to the east is a large fountain, and a smaller one still nearer; just the position which a chieftain would select, both on account of its elevation and the supply of water needed for his troops. Opposite to Jezreel, across a narrow valley, on the side of a parallel ridge, is Shunem, where the Philistines could watch the movements of the enemy with great advantage. Again, a village, Endor, lies on the northern side of the same ridge; so that Saul, leaving his camp at Jezreel, could steal his way, under cover of the night, across the intervening valley, and over the moderate summit which he would have to ascend, and then, after his consultation with the woman of Endor, could return to his forces without having been missed by any, except those in the secret. Finally, Bethshean, now Beisan, a little to the east, in the valley of the Jordan, visible, in fact, from Jezreel, must have been, judging from its natural facilities, a strong place; and hence, the Philistines, after

\* I make no account here of the slightly different form which the Arabic pronunciation gives to some of the names; because the change is so trifling as to leave no doubt that they are the places mentioned in Scripture. See the remarks on page 210 sq.

the battle, would naturally take possession of such a town; so that we find them entrenched precisely where we might expect, when we read of their mutilating there the body of Saul, as a part of their barbarous celebration of the victory.

It is well known that some of the most celebrated battle-fields of Grecian and Roman history correspond, at present, but imperfectly with the descriptions of ancient writers. It is found to be impossible, beyond a very general outline, to ascertain the position, and to trace the movements, of the contending armies. The reason of this is, not that we have any special occasion to question the trustworthiness of the writers, but because, no doubt, villages which they mention have changed their names, or have entirely disappeared; or because, in some instances, the convulsions of nature may have altered the course of streams, or disturbed the ancient demarcations between hills and valleys. Yet, Saul's last battle-field remains to this day mapped out before us on the face of the country almost as distinctly as if what was done there had been a contemporary event; though the Bible relates it of an age even more remote than that of the founding of Rome, of one later but a little than the siege of Troy.

#### SITUATION OF SAMARIA.

This celebrated capital of the ten tribes was situated on a hill, rising abruptly from the bosom of a beautiful valley to the height of some four hundred feet, and surrounded by a circle of hills still higher. A small Arab village hangs on the eastern brow of the eminence, called Sebastieh, a cor-

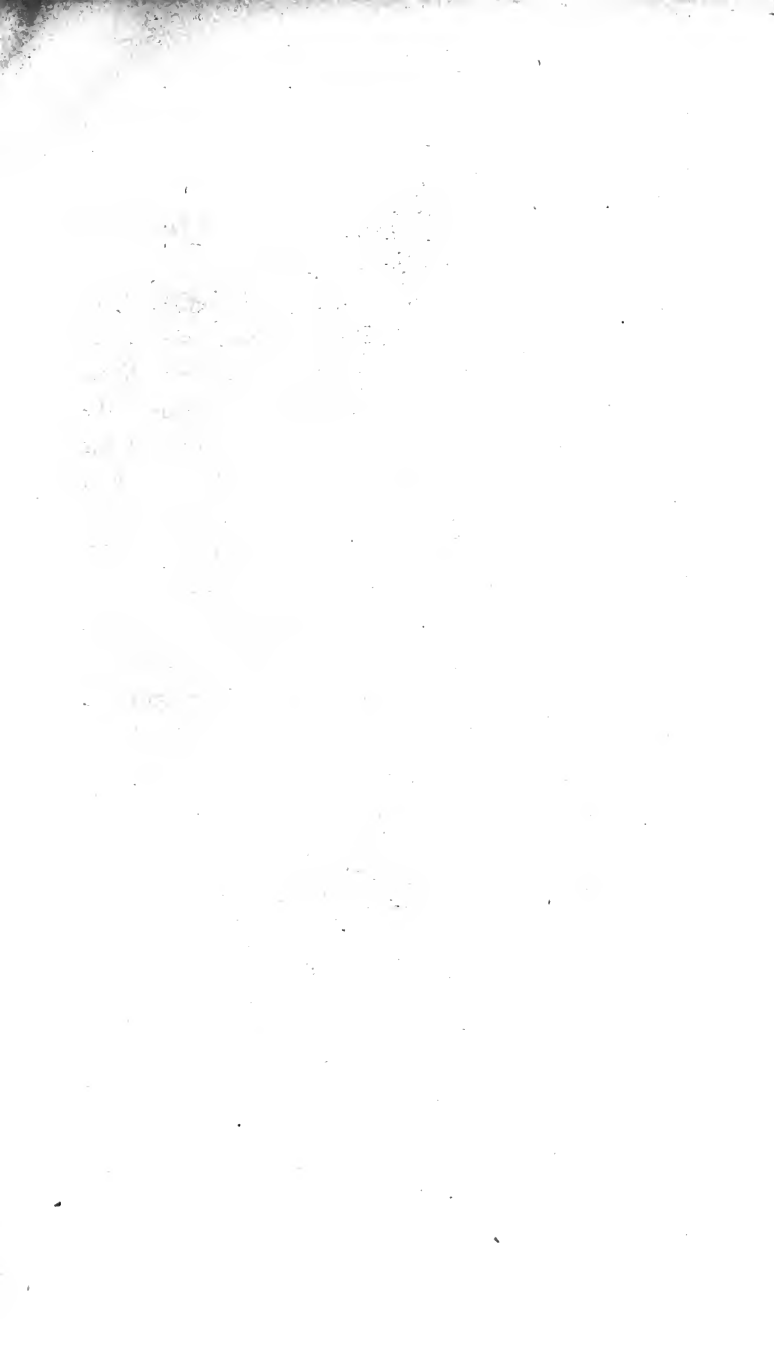
ruption of the Greek Sebaste, the name which Herod the Great gave to Samaria in honor of Augustus.

I spent several hours, on the twenty-ninth of April, in examining this interesting locality, and then crossed the mountains on the north of the valley, on my way to Nazareth. I was thinking, as I proceeded, of a passage in the book of Amos, and was anxious to know how strictly it was to be understood. The prophet (Amos 3, 9. 10), by a bold poetic figure, summons the inhabitants of Ashdod and Egypt to assemble on the hills around Samaria, and to see with their own eyes the iniquity practised there. They are called upon as heathen to testify against the wickedness of the professed people of God, and to pronounce them deserving of the punishment which the prophet affirms that they are about to incur.

“ Publish on the palaces \* in Ashdod,  
And on the palaces in the land of Egypt,  
And say :  
‘ Assemble on the mountains of Samaria,  
And behold the great tumults in her midst,  
And the oppressions in her ;’  
‘ For they know not how to do right,’  
Says Jehovah,  
‘ Who store up violence and pillage in their palaces.’ ”

It will be observed that the heathen witnesses in this case are supposed to take their stand on the hills which surround

\* That is, on the roofs of them, which afforded the herald a convenient place for being heard. See on the 70th page.



RUINS OF SAMARIA



Samaria, and to be able from that position to look down upon the city as exposed to their view below them. To what extent, now, is this representation figurative? How far does it conform to the actual condition of the country?

In my ascent of the mountains which I had to cross, I cast back an anxious eye, from time to time, to see whether I was rising above the level of the ancient Samaria. It was not long before I found myself off against the summit; and then after this, as other heights still followed, I soon had the pleasure of beholding the site of the once flourishing town lying below me; of feeling that I stood where I could fairly overlook, not only the valley, but the mount, which imparts to it so much beauty. I am sure that, had the ancient capital still crowned its summit, I could have looked into it, and seen the people in the streets, and distinguished their occupations.

#### DISCOVERY AT NINEVEH.

We have a definite account of the origin of Samaria in the Old Testament. In the thirty-first year of Asa, king of Judah, "began Omri to reign over Israel; and he bought the hill of Shemer, and built a city on the hill, which he called Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill," (1 Kings 16, 23. 24.) Mr. Layard, in his recent work on Nineveh,\* mentions a fact respecting Samaria, wonderfully corroborative of sacred history. Among the inscriptions on a tablet dug out of the ruins, he finds the city named as Beth Khumri, or Omri. As Samaria was built by

\* Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, p. 613.

Omri, it was entirely natural, and in accordance with an eastern custom, that it should be called after its founder, Beth Khumri, or the house of Omri. It will be remembered that the Assyrians, whose capital was Nineveh, destroyed Samaria, after a siege of three years, and carried the inhabitants into captivity, (2 Kings 17, 5.) On the same monument Mr. Layard found the name of Hazael, whom Elijah was directed to anoint king of Syria.

#### PROPHECY FULFILLED.

The subject will justify our turning aside to notice the striking manner in which the fate of Samaria has fulfilled the truth of prophecy. Micah (1, 6) foretold the doom of that city thus :

“ I will make Samaria as a stone-heap in the field ;  
As places for the planting of vineyards ;  
And I will pour into the valley her stones,  
And her foundations will I make bare.”

A few miserable huts constitute the modern Sebustieh, on one side of the hill. A church of the crusaders, now crumbling into ruins, stands over the reputed grave of John the Baptist. Of the splendid edifices with which Herod the Great adorned his favorite city, three or four clusters of columns, many of them broken, or half buried in the earth, are all that remains. The rest of the hill has been ploughed for centuries. Here and there may be seen a cleared spot, used as a threshing-floor. The upper part of the hill terminates with a succession of terraces, which I found to be cov-

ered with grain and fruit-trees. It has thus become "like a place for the planting of vineyards." In clearing the ground for cultivation, the stones, so abundant there from the destruction or decay of ancient buildings, have been picked out and thrown into heaps. How exactly does the language which foretold this desolation describe it! The city "shall be like a stone-heap in the field!" Nor does the parallel between the prediction and the fulfilment end here. Stones, which belonged to the walls or houses, have rolled down the sides of the hill, or have been thrown over the brow of it, and lie scattered along the edge of the valley.

" I will pour into the valley her stones,  
And her foundations I will make bare."

We are not to regard such particularity as essential, by any means, to the truth of prophecy; for minute descriptions are often employed in the Bible, which are designed to convey only general ideas. It is one of the laws of prophetic language that it makes use of specific traits or incidents as a means of impressing the mind more strongly. Yet, the foregoing instance exemplifies a class of predictions which, in the mode of their fulfilment, go entirely beyond the substance of the prophet's meaning, which accomplish remarkably the form, as well as the reality, of the events foretold.

#### COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.

I spent a night and a part of two days in the vicinity of the Lake of Tiberias. My tent was pitched near the Hot

Baths, about a mile south of the town of Tiberias, and, consequently, near the south end of the lake. In looking across the water to the other side, I had before me the country of the Gadarenes, where the swine, impelled by an evil spirit, plunged into the sea. I was struck with a mark of accuracy in the sacred writers which had never occurred to me till then. They state that "the swine ran violently down the steep place or precipice" (the article being required by the Greek), "and were choked in the sea." It is implied here, first, that the hills in that region approach near the water; and, secondly, that they fall off so abruptly along the shore that it would be natural for a writer, familiar with that fact, to refer to it as well known. Both these implications are correct. A mass of rocky hills overlook the sea on that side, so near the water that one sees their dark outline reflected from its surface, while their sides are, in general, so steep that a person familiar with the scenery would hardly think of speaking of *a* steep place or precipice, where so much of the coast forms but one continuous precipice. Our translators omit the definite article, and show, by this inadvertence, how naturally the more exact knowledge of the Evangelists influenced their language.

#### ADVANCE OF THE ASSYRIANS.

During my sojourn of a month at Jerusalem I made several excursions into the neighboring country. One of these embraced a visit to Anata, Beit Hanina, Neby Samuil, and other places. Leaving the Damascus gate about noon, we

crossed the upper part of the valley of Jehoshaphat, and, pursuing a north-eastern course, with the Mount of Olives off to the right, arrived, after an hour and a half, at Anata, the birthplace of Jeremiah.\* This village stands on a height which presents to the observer a wide prospect towards the north and north-east; and among the towns within sight were Jeba, and Er-Ram, names which identify them unquestionably with Gibeah and Ramah; while, a little further off, but not visible here, was Mukhmas, which must be the same as Michmash. Thus, four of the places which Isaiah mentions (10, 28, sq.), in his description of the approach of the Assyrian army, are found near each other, and north of Jerusalem; occupying precisely the situation which the poet's object in referring to them requires. He sees the enemy pouring down from the north; they reach, at length, the neighborhood of the devoted city; they take possession of one village after another; while the inhabitants flee at their approach, and fill the country with cries of terror and distress. A more spirited sketch of a hostile invasion is not to be found in any writer. It must be read in the Hebrew in order to be fully appreciated.

“ He comes to Ai, passes through Migron,  
At Michmash deposits his baggage;  
They cross the pass, Geba is our night-station;  
Terrified is Ramah, Gibeah of Saul flees.  
Shriek with thy voice, daughter of Gallim;  
Listen, O Laish; ah, poor Anathoth!

\* See the notice of this place on the 75th page.

Madmenah escapes, dwellers in Gebim take flight.\*

Yet this day he halts at Nob :

He shakes his fist against the mount, daughter of Zion,

The hill of Jerusalem."

"The pass or passage here, called 'the passage of Michmash' in 1 Samuel 13, 23, is, probably," says Dr. Robinson, "a steep, precipitous valley," which he crossed just before coming to the modern Mukhmas. Nob, a name which has perished, appears to have been the last station in their line of march, whence they could see Jerusalem, and whence they could be seen, as they "shook the fist" in proud derision of their enemies.† Standing there, in the presence of so many of the places which Isaiah has mentioned, it required but little aid of the imagination to seem to see the moving forms of warriors, as they spread themselves over hill and valley, and to hear their shouts of defiance, as they came on, impatient to begin and end the strife which, as they imagined, was to crown their enterprise with the possession of the holy city.

#### THE SCENERY OF SHECHEM.

The great northern road from Jerusalem to Samaria and Galilee, which the Saviour sometimes followed, in his journeys from one province to another, led along the water-shed of the hills which fill up the country between the Mediterranean on

\* The full idea, says Gesenius, is, that they hurry off to conceal their treasures.

† Nob was, not improbably, on the northern ridge of Olivet, whence the invaders would obtain their first sight of Jerusalem.

the west, and the valley of the Jordan on the east. A few hours north of Bethel, which lay on this route (see Judges 1, 22), a valley suddenly opens upon the traveler among the hills, which, though not so extensive as Esdraelon or Sharon, is yet unsurpassed, in point of beauty and fertility, by any other region in the holy land. It is now called the plain of Mukhna; it runs very nearly north and south, and may be, on the average, ten or twelve miles in length, and a mile and a half in breadth. Few places offer so many points of Biblical interest as this. Towards the upper part of the plain the mountains which skirt its western side fall apart, leaving a somewhat narrow defile between them, where stands Nablus, the ancient Shechem or Sychar. A more lovely spot than that which greets the eye here it would be difficult to find in any land. Streams, which gush from perennial fountains, impart a bright and constant freshness to the vegetation. Fruit-trees of every kind known to the climate flourish here abundantly. The deep verdure which clothes the gardens and orchards produces the more pleasing effect because it has its foil, so to speak, in the sterile aspect of the adjacent mountains. It is no wonder that the patriarchs were fond of pitching their tents here, and pasturing their flocks on the neighboring plain. Abraham, on his first arrival in the land of Canaan, "came unto the place of Shechem, unto the oaks of Moreh" (as the Hebrew should be rendered), so called after the name of the native sheikh or chieftain to whom they belonged, (Genesis 12, 6.) Jacob, on his return from Mesopotamia, dwelt for a time near She-

chem, and purchased a portion of land of the prince of the country, (Genesis 33, 18, sq.) This statement is wonderfully confirmed by local evidence. It is said that Jacob, on that occasion, "came to Shalim, a city of Shechem, and pitched his tent before the city;" that is, according to a familiar Hebraism, to the east of it. A village called Salim is found still on the opposite side of the plain, lying eastward, therefore, from Nablus, and having a just claim to be regarded as the ancient Shalim. To this place, at a subsequent period, Jacob sent Joseph from Hebron, to inquire respecting the welfare of his brethren; for they "had gone to feed their father's flock in Shechem," (Genesis 37, 12. 14.) Not finding them here, it is said that he followed them to Dothan, whither they had gone to pasture their flocks, and where he was afterwards sold to the Midianites, as they passed that way from Gilead, beyond the Jordan, into Egypt. A Dothan, undoubtedly the same place, is still found at the distance of a few hours from Shechem. It lies not only in a rich plain, such as the sons of Jacob would naturally select, but on the road which leads at present from Beisan, one of the fords of the Jordan, to the plain of Sharon, and thence to Egypt.\*

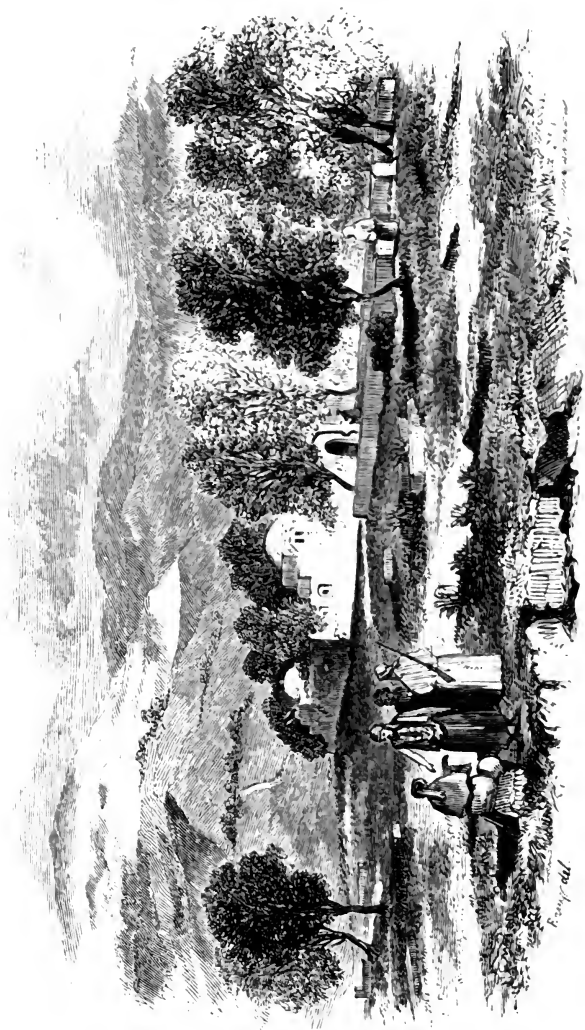
#### THE TOMB OF JOSEPH.

The "parcel of ground which Jacob bought of Hamor" (Joshua 24, 32), and "gave to his son Joseph" (John 4, 5),

\* See Asher's *Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, Vol. II., p. 434; and *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1853), p. 122.



JOSEPH'S GRAVE



must have been in this vicinity. A freehold on the rich plain of Mukhna would have been a patrimony worthy of such a father to a favorite son. "The bones of Joseph were brought up out of Egypt," at the time of the exodus, and buried in this field at Shechem, (Joshua 27, 32.) The tomb which distinguishes the traditionary grave of Joseph is still shown at the entrance of the valley of Nablus, a little to the right of the traveler's ordinary path. The present monument is built in the ordinary style of an eastern Welee, and is a place of resort, not only to Jews and Christians, but Mohammedans and Samaritans; all of whom concur in the belief that it stands on the veritable spot where the patriarch was buried. I found the walls of the interior covered with the names of pilgrims, representing almost every land and language; though the Hebrew character was the most prominent one. It is not known that the ground under the tomb has ever been excavated. It is a reasonable supposition that there, or not far off, beneath the surface of that plain, the sarcophagus in which Joseph's body was put, after being embalmed in Egypt (Genesis 50, 26), and which was brought hither by the Israelites, may be concealed at the present time. The monument stands nearer the base of Ebal than of Gerizim, and, being surrounded by high trees, has an air of seclusion and repose well suited to the natural associations of the place.

## GERIZIM AND EBAL.

A mountain, the ancient Gerizim, springing up to the height of about eight hundred feet, guards the entrance of

the valley on the left hand, and another, which is Ebal, nearly as high, stands on the right. It was on these heights that Joshua, in obedience to the command of Moses, assembled the tribes, soon after their arrival in the promised land, to utter responsively the blessings and curses of the law. See Deuteronomy 27, 11, and Joshua 8, 33. 34. The hills are at such a distance from each other that it has been judged that the voices of the speakers, in a clear day, might have been heard distinctly from one summit to the other. It was from the top of Gerizim, in the rear of the town, where it is not so high as nearer to the plain, that Jotham delivered his fable of the trees to the men of Shechem, to reprove them for their folly in making Abimelech king, (Judges 9, 1, sq.) The language of the account deserves notice. He "lifted up his voice," it is said, "and cried" unto the men of Shechem. With such an exertion of the voice he could easily have been heard by the people of the city; for the hill so overhangs the valley that a person from the side or summit would have no difficulty in speaking to listeners at the base. This fact refutes the objection that the statement in the book of Judges involves a physical impossibility. Later history mentions a case in which soldiers on the hill shouted to the people in the city, and endeavored to instigate them to an insurrection. There is something about the elastic atmosphere of an eastern clime which causes it to transmit sound with wonderful celerity and distinctness. Gerizim was the holy mount of the Samaritans (John 4, 20), where they built a temple, which they

regarded as the true place of worship, in opposition to the temple at Jerusalem.

## JACOB'S WELL.

But that which gives to this locality its most sacred interest is the continued existence here of the well where our Saviour held his memorable conversation with the woman of Samaria. I have no doubt whatever of the identification of this well; the various local proofs which point to that spot, and the uniformity of the tradition, furnish an amount of testimony respecting the question too strong to be set aside. The Saviour was journeying, at the time, from Judea to Galilee (John 4, 4, sq.), and, as he passed through Samaria, would cross, naturally, the plain of Mukhna. It was noon-day, "the sixth hour," and, being wearied and thirsty, he sat down at the mouth of the well. There, too, I sat down, and taking the record of the "gracious words which proceeded from his lips" on that occasion, I read it, amid the surrounding objects, not only with new interest, but with a perception of the points of connection between the narrative and the outward scene, which left on my mind no doubt that it was the place where Jesus conversed with the Samaritan woman. The well is near the western edge of the plain, just in front of the opening between the hills where Nablus, the site of Shechem, is situated. Before me, therefore, as I sat there, was the town from which the people came forth, on the report of the woman, to see and hear the prophet for themselves. Behind me were the fields, then waving with grain, but at the earlier season of the year when Christ was



there, recently ploughed and sowed, which rendered his illustration so natural: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields" (referring to the people), "for they are ripe already to harvest." My curiosity to taste the water I could not gratify, on account of the old difficulty; "the well is still deep, and there is nothing to draw with." I threw a stone into the mouth of it, and could hear it rumbling away in the distance, as it bounded from side to side, until it sank, at last, in the water at the bottom. It has been ascertained to be at least seventy-five feet deep, bored through the solid rock. "In this mountain our fathers worshipped," said the woman, and the Jews say "that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." How abrupt, how vague, is this reference to a mountain, as it stands in the report of the conversation! But it all becomes definite, intelligible, as we read the history on the spot. There is Gerizim just at hand, at which the woman pointed at the moment, or glanced with the eye, as she uttered these words. In short, John's narrative of the occurrence at the well forms a picture, for which one sees that the perfect framework is provided, as he looks around him, in front of the hills which enclose the modern Nablus.

A church stood, anciently, over this spot so hallowed once by the presence of the Saviour. The common tradition supposes it to have been built by Helena, the mother of Constantine. It was erected, certainly, at an early period; for Jerome, near the close of the fourth century, in his sketch of Paula's pilgrimage, says that she came to Shechem, and

entered the church that stood over Jacob's well. The ground there is slightly elevated, like a platform, showing the space which the edifice occupied, and building stones lie scattered around, formerly wrought, no doubt, into its walls or foundations. The original mouth of the well is no longer visible on the outside; a vaulted roof having been built over it, through which it is necessary to descend, in order to reach the proper entrance of the excavation. The aperture is barely large enough to allow a person to crowd his body through it. The neighboring Arabs, ever on the watch to observe the approach of strangers, take care to keep a heavy stone over the opening, so as to obtain a reward for assisting to roll away the barricade.

#### AN OBJECTION NOTICED.

The interest which every one must feel in identifying this well requires that a word should be said respecting an objection which some have urged against the traditionary opinion. The objection is that the true well must have been nearer to Sychar than the one pointed out as such, because fountains must have existed then, as now, close to the city, where the woman could have obtained water with much less difficulty. It deserves notice here (which those who allege this circumstance against the common view have generally overlooked), that the difficulty, if such it be, affects, really, not so much the identity of the place as the consistency of the sacred writer; for, whatever may have been the motive for the act, it is expressly stated that the woman did repair to a well for water where she knew that it would be difficult to obtain it (John

4, 11), and that, too, when other wells, of easier access, must have been at hand. The following suggestions have been made with reference to the objection mentioned above; they seem to me to do away entirely its force. First, though the record may imply that the woman was well known in Sychar, it does not say that she resided there; she may have lived where she was nearer to Jacob's well than to any of the other wells of the city. Secondly, the fact that it was Jacob's well may have given a value to the water, in the eyes of the Samaritans, which made them anxious to obtain it occasionally, though at the cost of some considerable trouble. Thirdly, the depth of the well may have rendered the water cooler than that of fountains nearer to the surface; and, finally, Sychar probably extended further east towards the plain than the modern town, so that the greater distance was trifling when the object was to obtain water so much valued.

It has been deemed surprising that any one should ever have thought of boring a well to such a depth, through the solid rock, when there are so many natural fountains in the neighborhood, which furnish an easy and abundant supply of water. Dr. Robinson urges this fact very properly, as showing that it must be Jacob's well, and, consequently, the one at which John places the interview between Christ and the Samaritan woman. "I can solve this difficulty," he says, "only by admitting that this is probably the actual well of the patriarch; and that it was dug by him in some connection with the possession of a 'parcel of ground'

bought of Hamor, the father of Shechem; which he gave to his son Joseph, and in which Joseph, and, probably, his brethren, were buried. The practice of the patriarchs to dig wells is well known (Genesis 21, 25, 30; 26, 15. 18—32); and if Jacob's field, as it would seem, was here, before the mouth of the valley of Shechem, he might prefer not to be dependent for water on fountains which lay up that valley, and were not his own." \*

#### THE LOST BIBLE.

Mr. Bonar, who, with his Scotch friends, visited the well in 1839, in descending to the mouth of it, had the misfortune to lose his Bible, which fell from his breast-pocket, and was soon heard plunging into the water at the bottom. The guide declared that it was impossible to recover it, and it was given up as lost.† Dr. Wilson, when he was there, about three years afterwards, resolved that he would put that declaration to the test, and, at the same time, endeavor to ascertain the exact depth of the well. By promising a liberal reward, he induced a Jew, named Jacob, to go down and search for the lost treasure. He has given a graphic sketch of the proceeding. "Jacob was ready at our command, and, when he had tied the rope round his body, below his shoulders, he received our parting instructions. We asked him to call out to us the moment that he might arrive at the surface of the water; we told him, also, to pull out

\* See Biblical Researches, Vol. III., p. 112.

† Narrative of a Mission to the Jews (Edinburgh, 1852), p. 212.

one of the candles with which he had stored his breast, and to ignite it when he might get below. As he looked into the fearful pit, on the brink of which he stood, terror took hold of him, and he betook himself to prayer in the Hebrew tongue. On a given signal we let him go. The Arabs held with us the rope, and we took care that he should descend as gently as possible. When our material was nearly exhausted he called out, 'I have reached the bottom; and it is at present scarcely covered with water.' Forthwith he kindled a light, and, that he might have every advantage, we threw him down a quantity of dry sticks, with which he made a blaze, which distinctly showed us the whole of the well, from the top to the bottom. We saw the end of the rope at its lower part; and we put a knot upon it at the margin above, that we might have the exact measurement when Jacob might come up. After searching for about five minutes for the Bible, among the stones and mud at the bottom, he joyfully cried out, 'It is found! it is found!' He was, evidently, much frightened at the idea of reascending to the light of day, and expressed his fears. 'Never mind,' Mordecai, one of his countrymen, cried to him from the top, on observing his alarm; 'you will get up by the help of the God of Jacob.' He betook himself again to prayer, more earnestly than before his descent. We found it no easy matter to get him pulled up; and when, at length, he came into our hands, he was so terrified and exhausted that he was unable to speak; and we laid him down on the margin of the well, that he might collect his breath. The book, from having

been so long steeped in the water and mud, was, with the exception of the boards, reduced to a mass of pulp. In our effort to recover it we had ascertained the depth of the well, which is exactly seventy-five feet. Its diameter is about nine feet."\* The depth has been variously estimated, but this measurement, made with such means for attaining accuracy, may be regarded as putting the question at rest.

#### THE DESCENT TO JERICHO.

Many single expressions occur in the Bible, which reveal the accuracy of the writers in speaking of places, and their relative situation with reference to each other. One example of this I find in the parable of the good Samaritan. It is said that "a certain man was going down" (so the tense of the Greek verb should be rendered) "from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead," (Luke 10, 31.) The valley of the Jordan, where Jericho was situated, is about four thousand feet lower than Jerusalem. After crossing the dry bed of the Kedron, the traveler passes over the southern slope of the Mount of Olives, and then commences a descent which is hardly interrupted till he reaches the plain of Jericho.

The mode of describing the inverse journey from Jericho to Jerusalem is equally exact. Having crossed the Jordan from the eastern side, Jesus, as we read in Luke 19, 28, and Mark 10, 32, "went before" the disciples, "ascending up to

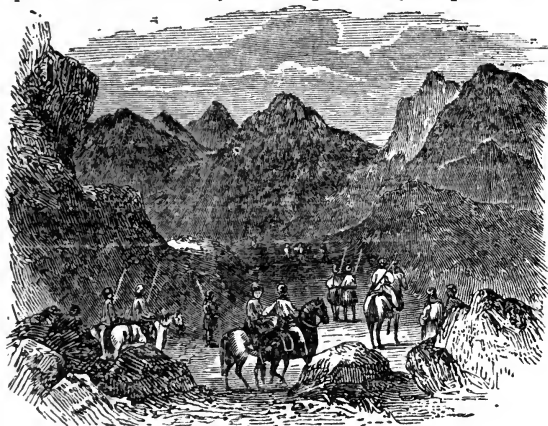
\* Lands of the Bible, Vol. II., p. 55, sq.

Jerusalem." We have the same phrase applied to the road between the two places in Matthew 20, 17, and Mark 10, 32. So, also, in the Old Testament, we find a like unstudied observance of the same geographical relation. Thus, the Kenites "go up out of the city of palm-trees (Jericho), with the children of Judah, into the wilderness of Judah" (Judges 1, 16); Shimei and the Benjamites, with the men of Judah, came down to meet David, who had re-crossed the Jordan, after the defeat of Absalom (2 Samuel 19, 16, 17); Barzillai refuses to go up with the king to Jerusalem (19, 34); Naaman goes down from Elijah to the Jordan (2 Kings 5, 14); which are only some of the passages that might be quoted.

#### SCENE OF THE PARABLE.

It may be mentioned here that the scene of the robbery which calls into exercise the benevolence of the good Samaritan is referred, very justly, to the region between Jerusalem and Jericho. It is famous, at the present day, as the haunt of thieves and robbers. No part of the traveler's journey is so dangerous as the expedition to Jericho and the Dead Sea. The oriental pilgrims who repair to the Jordan have the protection of an escort of Turkish soldiers; and others, who would make the same journey, must either go in company with them, or provide for their safety by procuring a special guard. Hardly a season passes in which some luckless wayfarer is not killed or robbed in "going down from Jerusalem to Jericho." The place derives its hostile character from its terrible wildness and desolation.

If we might conceive of the ocean as being suddenly congealed and petrified when its waves are tossed mountain-high, and dashing in wild confusion against each other, we should then have some idea of the aspect of the desert in which the Saviour has placed so truthfully the parable of the good Samaritan. The ravines, the almost inaccessible cliffs, the caverns, furnish admirable lurking places for robbers; they can rush forth unexpectedly upon their victims, and escape as soon almost beyond the possibility of pursuit.



ROAD TO JERICO.

## HEALING OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON.

The account of the healing of the nobleman's son furnishes another instance of this exact phraseology. The Saviour, when he wrought that cure, was at Cana, in Galilee, which is among the hills, not far from Nazareth. He was requested to go to Capernaum, which was at the north-west

end of the Lake of Galilee, where the nobleman resided. I passed over the ground between the two places, and found it to be, as would be expected from the well-known depression of the lake below the general level of the country, descending at almost every step. In accordance with this, entirely, we hear the distressed father crying out abruptly, "Come down, ere my child die," (John 4, 49.) We read afterwards that, as "he was coming down," that is, to Capernaum, his servants met him with the information that his son was healed, (John 4, 51.)

#### GIBEAH OF SAUL.

Saul's original home was at Gibeah, identical with Jeba, which, as I have said, is visible on a hill from Anata. The name signifies an elevated place. This situation of Gibeah discloses itself incidentally quite often in Saul's history. Thus, we read that Saul goes up from Gilgal to his house in Gibeah (1 Samuel 15, 34); the Ziphites go up to him at Gibeah, in order to betray David to him (23, 19), and request Saul to come down to them (23, 20), and Saul comes down from Gibeah into the wilderness (26, 2).\* Though, in this last instance, the desert of Ziph, which was in the hilly region of Judea, may have been higher than Gibeah, it was still necessary to descend in leaving the latter place, and hence the expression to that effect is correct here also.

\* An article in the *Studien und Kritiken* (1854, p. 851, sq.), has suggested some of these passages, though they are cited there for a different object.

## TRANSMISSION OF SCRIPTURE NAMES.

I introduce this topic here, because, though it differs somewhat from the leading contents of the chapter, it connects itself most naturally with the topographical illustrations of the work, and supplies a species of evidence too important to be omitted.

The transmission, through so many centuries, of the Biblical names of places in the holy land, is a standing monument of the truth of the Bible. It is hard to extirpate the aboriginal names of a country. The race which is spreading over British India, at the present day, when they plant a new town, now and then give to it a new name. The old places, on the contrary, retain their old names. The Romans, who extended their arms over Gaul, Britain, and parts of Germany, originated but few, very few of the names now borne by the cities and villages in those countries. Even when the earlier inhabitants have disappeared before the new comers, as in the case of the Etruscans in Italy, or the Indians in some parts of America, they have left traces of their language behind them. Our own mountains and rivers, with their Indian appellations, are not more enduring than the proofs that an older race inhabited these shores before our forefathers came to them. If, then, the records of the Old Testament are true, the successive waves of conquest that have swept over Palestine cannot have obliterated all the marks of early times. If the towns, mentioned as existing there in the age of Abraham, Joshua and David, existed

really, it must be possible to identify many of them still. As, on the one hand, the impossibility of finding any trace of them now would discredit the sacred historians, so, on the other, the discovery of the same names applied to existing localities, their preservation, notwithstanding so many invasions of Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Persians, Saracens, Crusaders and Turks, who have overrun the country at different times, becomes a striking witness to the truth of the Scriptures. I will not undertake to state numerically how large a proportion of the towns mentioned in the history of Joshua's conquest of Canaan occupy their ancient site; but, considering the antiquity of the record, it is surprisingly great. To these, of so early a date, should be added others, first noticed in the Old Testament or the New, at a later period. They bear the same names as in ancient times, slightly changed, in conformity with the Arabic, the spoken language of the East. Even in cases where, during the reigns of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies, some of the Scripture places received Greek names, they generally lost them, in the course of time, and regained their proper oriental appellations. Hameth (Joshua 19, 35), known in the age of the Greeks as Epiphania, Tadmor (2 Chronicles 8, 3) as Palmyra, Rabbath Ammon (Deuteronomy 3, 11) as Philadelphia, are examples of this tenacity of the East in asserting the rights of its own language, and rejecting foreign innovations. Indeed, these changes appear never to have been current among the natives of the country, and ceased as soon as the power which had imposed them was broken.

In the few instances in which towns in Syria have Greek names at the present time, as Antioch, Tubariyeh, and some others, it will be found, almost universally, that the towns were of Greek origin, or founded by those in the Greek or Roman interest, and, consequently, had no previous names of which they could be dispossessed.\*

The chief requisites for establishing the identity of a place are that the modern name be the same as the ancient one, or deducible from it, and that the situation agree with what is said or implied on that point in the Scriptures. The geographical notices of the Bible, even in regard to places very ancient and comparatively obscure, are sometimes remarkably specific. Thus, in Judges 21, 19, it is said that Shiloh, where the ark of the covenant was kept, in the days of the Judges, was "on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem and on the south of Lebonah." I lodged at Bethel on the night of the twenty-eighth of April; on the next day, at the distance of a few hours north of Bethel, I turned aside to the right to visit Shilun, or Shiloh, and soon after passed, on the left, El-Lebbun, the Lebonah of Scripture, as I pursued "the highway" to Nablus, the ancient Shechem. The identification of this last place is made out with entire certainty by a process of historical combination, and in a different way, therefore, from that adopted in most cases, and described above. At Main, the Maon of Nabal (1 Samuel 25, 2), near

\* Compare the remarks of Gesenius appended to Burckhardt's *Reisen in Syrien*, Vol. I., p. 483.

Hebron, the traveler has in view, at once, at least seven, not improbably nine, different places which retain their ancient names, but slightly modified. Among these, besides Maon, are Semua, Attir, Anab, Schuweikeh, Yuttah, which correspond respectively to Eshtemoa, Jattir, Anab, Socoh, and Juttah, all mentioned in the early book of Joshua.

Besides the foregoing examples, in order to show more fully the nature and the extent of the resemblance between the ancient and modern names, I subjoin the following list, placing those with the modern or Arabic orthography on the left, those with the Hebrew or Greek on the right.

Anata, . . . . .	Anathoth.	Jeba, . . . . .	Geba.
Akka, . . . . .	Acco.	Jelbon, . . . . .	Gilboa.
Askulan, . . . . .	Askelon.	Jebah, . . . . .	Gibeah.
Beit Sur, . . . . .	Beth Zur.	Jenin (probably),	En-Ganim.
Beit Lahm, . . . . .	Bethlehem.	Jufna (probably),	Ophni.
Beit Ur, . . . . .	Beth Horon.	Kana (unchanged),	Kana.
Beisan, . . . . .	Beth-Shean.	Khurmul, . . . . .	Carmel.
Bireh, . . . . .	Beer, Beeroth.	Libnan, . . . . .	Lebanon.
Demaskh, . . . . .	Damascus.	Ludd, . . . . .	Lydda.
Deburieh, . . . . .	Daberath.	Mejdel, . . . . .	Magdela, Mig-
Endur, . . . . .	Endor.		dol.
Esdud, . . . . .	Ashdod.	Mucmas, . . . . .	Michmash.
Gazur, . . . . .	Gesur.	Nasirah, . . . . .	Nazareth.
Ghuzzeh, . . . . .	Gaza.	Nein, . . . . .	Nain.
Gib, . . . . .	Gibeon.	Ram, . . . . .	Rameh.
Hulhul, . . . . .	Halhul.	Rameh, . . . . .	Ramah.
Hummam, . . . . .	Hammath.	Riha,* . . . . .	Jericho.
Jebna, . . . . .	Jabneh.	Saida, . . . . .	Sidon.

\* Though these words appear so unlike to the eye, the ear finds

Salim, . . . . .	Salim or Sha- lim.	Tubariyeh (of Greek origin), . . . . .	Tiberias.
Sarafend, . . . . .	Sarepta.	Urtas (probably),	Etam.
Selwan, . . . . .	Siloam.	Yafa, . . . . .	Joppa.
Sur, . . . . .	Tyre.	Yalo, . . . . .	Ajalon.
Solan, . . . . .	Shunem.	Zerin, . . . . .	Jezreel.*
Tekua, . . . . .	Tekoa.		

I mention the foregoing as examples only of the similarity which they illustrate, and mention these in preference to others, that would be equally pertinent, because they happen to be among the places which it was my good fortune to visit or to have a sight of. What is worthy of special note is, that many of these names have been brought to light recently. Some of them have hardly been mentioned in books since they were last mentioned in the Bible, till the present century or the last. Geographers and tourists have traversed the land, and, as they have asked the inhabitants to tell them the names of

them quite the same ; as Riha has a strong guttural pronunciation. This remark applies to some of the other names.

\* I cannot refrain from bearing testimony here to the very great value of the "List of Arabic Names of Places" appended to the third volume of the "Biblical Researches." They were collected and arranged by the Rev. Dr. Smith, of Beirut, as the fruit of inquiries made in the course of various journeys in all parts of Palestine, during a period of several years. The traveler, who would obtain a knowledge of the ancient and modern topography of that country, whatever other helps he may forego, should not omit to carry with him a copy of those "lists," so remarkably full and accurate.

their villages, have had the old Scripture names given back to them from the mouths of the people.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF HELBON.

The discovery of this place deserves a separate notice, in as much as the name has long been applied to a wrong locality, and the error has been but recently corrected. In *Ezekiel* 27, 18, mention is made of "the wine of Helbon," as one of the articles of traffic which the Tyrians received from Damascus, in exchange for their merchandise. It has been commonly supposed that this Helbon was identical with Haleb or Aleppo, a populous city in a rich plain, north-east from Damascus. While at this latter place I was informed by Dr. Poulding, one of the American missionaries there, that a valley, called the valley of Helbon, exists on the eastern slope of Anti-Lebanon, north of the Barrada, which receives its name from Helbon, one of its principal villages. He has visited the place, and states that the grapes produced there are remarkable for their fine quality, and that the wine obtained from them is regarded as the choice wine of that part of Syria. The wine of the ancient Helbon had a similar reputation; and that circumstance, together with the situation of the place and the coincidence of the name, leaves but little doubt that the modern Helbon on Anti-Lebanon is the town or valley to which the prophet referred. This fact was mentioned to Dr. Robinson, who visited Damascus a few weeks later. I see that he has expressed the opinion (no man living has a better knowledge of the topog-

raphy of Palestine) that the conjecture of the missionaries as to the identity of the places is correct.\*

#### TESTIMONY OF RITTER.

It cannot fail to gratify the reader to know the opinion of the celebrated Ritter, the first of living geographers, in regard to the manner in which the Bible has maintained its character for accuracy under the severe scrutiny which it has undergone, from the progress of modern researches in Palestine. He has recently declared his testimony, on this point, the substance of which may be comprised in the following statement.†

In the book of Joshua, he says, which relates the conquest and distribution of the land of Canaan, the geographical character is predominant. Its contents, therefore, in this respect, admit of being brought to the test of comparison with the ascertained condition of the country; and the result is, that its accuracy has been fully established in the minutest details, even when the examination has been pursued into the most unimportant and trivial local relations. Its notices, not only of distinct regions, but of valleys, fountains, mountains, villages, have been confirmed, often with surprising certainty and particularity. The entire political and religious life of the Hebrews was interwoven in the closest manner, like a piece of network, with the geography of the

\* *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1853, p. 143.

† In a discourse delivered at Berlin, entitled *Ein Blick auf Palästina und seine christliche Bevölkerung* (1852).

land, far more so than is true of the modern European nations ; and hence the opportunity to verify the alleged or implied connection between places and events is the more perfect, and affords results the more satisfactory. Most decisive is the rebuke which infidelity has received from this new species of testimony ; it has been compelled to confess with shame that it has imposed on itself and on others by the unfounded doubts which it has raised against the truth of the Scriptures. The authenticity of the historical books of the Old Testament has been shown to be capable of vindication on a side hitherto too much overlooked ; their fidelity in all matters within the sphere of geography places a new argument in the hands of the defenders of Revelation.

I pass over the details of Ritter's illustration ; he gives one of a very striking character, taken from the account of Joshua's second campaign in the south of Palestine, (Joshua 11, 16, sq.; 15, 21, sq.) He shows that the division of the country there into five parts, the scene of that expedition, rests upon a basis in nature, upon a diversity of geographical position, which none but an eye-witness could have remarked, and which modern travelers find to be entirely characteristic of the region still. He shows, in addition to this general accuracy in the outline, that the specialities are equally true ; that many of the cities and towns which are mentioned have remained under their ancient names to the present day, and, also, occur together in groups, precisely in the manner that the sacred writers represent them as having

been arranged of old. Of an hundred examples equally in point, the foregoing, he says, is only one.

Worthy to be connected with this testimony is the candid avowal with which Lieutenant Lynch closes the account of his exploration of the Dead Sea, and the neighboring region. "We entered upon this sea," he says, "with conflicting opinions. One of the party was sceptical, and another a professed unbeliever of the Mosaic account. After twenty-two days' close investigation, if I am not mistaken, we are unanimous in the conviction of the truth of the Scripture account of the destruction of the cities of the plain. The conclusion we have reached," he adds, "I record with diffidence, as a protest against the shallow deductions of those who would be unbelievers." \*

\* See the close of the eighteenth chapter of his Narrative.

## CHAPTER VI.

### JEWISH OPINIONS AND USAGES.

OF the Jews in Palestine, their condition and prospects, the traveler has an opportunity to learn but little, unless he makes it an object of special endeavor to seek them out, and enter into personal connection with them. It would be easy to collect ample information on this subject from the works of those who have undertaken missions of inquiry to the Jews in that country. I would name, in particular, the Narrative of Messrs. Bonar and McCheyne, and Dr. Wilson's "Lands of the Bible," as among the best sources of knowledge respecting this interesting people, to which the inquisitive reader can refer. I noted in my journal a few points only which it would accord with my design to mention in this work. The items have a general bearing on the illustration of the Scriptures, though they are not all equally related to that object.

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### THE JEWS AT JERUSALEM.

The Jewish population at Jerusalem has been variously estimated from three to five thousand. Dr. Shultz, late Prus-

sian consul there, placed it as high as seven thousand. The number varies, no doubt, from time to time, since many of them are pilgrims, who come and go in a very uncertain manner. Few of them, comparatively, are natives of the country. The majority of them are aged persons, who repair to the holy city to spend the remainder of their days and secure the privilege of being buried in the valley of the Kedron, which, as their traditions assert, is to be the scene of the last judgment. At the Jews' Wailing Place, I met, one day, a venerable man, bowed with age, apparently beyond fourscore, who told me that, in obedience to his sense of duty, he had forsaken his children and home in England, and had come, unattended by any friend, to die and make his grave at Jerusalem. Others of them are those who come hither to fulfil a vow, or acquire the merit of a pilgrimage, and then return to the countries where they reside. Among them may be found representatives from almost every land, though the Spanish, Polish and German Jews compose the greater number. Like their brethren in other parts of Palestine, except a few in some commercial places, they are wretchedly poor, and live chiefly on alms contributed by their countrymen in Europe and America. They devote most of their time to holy employments, as they are called; they frequent the synagogues, roam over the country to visit places memorable in their ancient history, read assiduously the Old Testament and the writings of their Rabbies. Those of them who make any pretensions to learning understand the Hebrew and Rabbinic, and speak as their vernacular

tongue the language of the country where they formerly lived, or whence their fathers emigrated. As would be expected, from the character of the motive which brings them to the holy land, they are distinguished, as a class, for their bigoted attachment to Judaism. The Palestine Jews may be called, if any deserve that appellation, the "devout" men of their age and nation.

These particulars have some additional interest, because they correspond so fully with what is intimated in Acts 2, 5, sq., as true in the age of the apostles. The assembly which Peter and the other disciples addressed on the day of Pentecost was made up very much of such devotees, who had come to Jerusalem "out of every nation under heaven." The miracle, too, of addressing them in different languages was made necessary by the fact that they belonged to various countries, and had been brought up to speak as many different tongues or dialects. They were "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and in Cappadocia, in Pontus and Egypt, Cretes and Arabians;" and yet they said, "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." Jerusalem is still a Babel of confused voices, though not on so large a scale. A part of the ceremony in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, at Easter, consists in the delivery of a discourse in the principal languages of Asia and Europe, for the edification of the various classes of pilgrims who are present at that great festival.

## SYNAGOGUES.

The modern Jews at Jerusalem have several synagogues, which they attend, not promiscuously, but according to their national or geographical affinities. The particular bond of union which connects them, in this case, is that of their birth or early residence in the same foreign land, and their using, consequently, the same dialect. As the number of those from a single country may often be too small to form a separate congregation, they unite with those who come from the same general part of the world, or are descended from those who, at some remote period, dwelt together, but were afterwards scattered to other regions. Under this wider principle of association, the synagogues at Jerusalem are divided between the Sepharadim, as they are called, who comprise the native and African Jews, and those from Spain and Portugal; and the Ashkenazim, or the German Jews, including those from Poland, Hungary, and some other lands. I am not sure that those of Portuguese descent do not meet by themselves. The synagogues, eight or ten in number, stand in the Jews' quarter, which occupies the eastern half of the portion of Mount Zion enclosed within the city walls, overlooking the hollow between Zion and Moriah. I learned that the Jews at Safet, in northern Galilee, who amount to about three thousand, distribute their synagogues in the same manner. They appropriate four of them to the use of the Spanish and Arabian Jews, and four of them to the use of the German and Polish Jews.

We see here the operation of the same rule which gave rise to so many synagogues, known under different appellations, in the first Christian age. See Acts 6, 9, sq. We learn there that those who engaged in discussion with Stephen belonged to different synagogues, frequented by those who had their birth in different countries. Thus, some of them were from the synagogue of the Libertines, or Roman Jews, being freedmen, or the sons of freedmen, who had come from Italy; some were from the synagogue of the Cilicians, among whom, probably, was Saul of Tarsus, the capital of that province; the Alexandrians, the Cyreneans and others, had, also, their distinct places of worship.

The style in which these houses of worship are arranged furnishes, probably, a good idea of those of which we read in the New Testament, which were honored so often by the presence and teaching of our Lord. Their construction is, generally, simple and unpretending. A platform, from which the Scriptures are read, stands in the middle of the room. Rude benches or seats are crowded together, without much regard to order. Some of the synagogues have a gallery, screened with lattice-work, behind which the women are permitted to sit and listen. When this convenience does not exist they look through the doors and windows, but keep at a distance from the men. The ancient temple, in like manner, had its court of the women, where they occupied a separate place by themselves. Every synagogue has a bath, under the same roof or in the vicinity, for enabling the worshippers to perform the ablutions to which they attach so much impor-

tance. Scripture mottoes, in Hebrew, are inscribed here and there on the walls, admonitory of the sanctity required of those who would offer to God acceptable worship. The most elegant synagogue which I saw was one owned by the Spanish Jews at Safet, just completed at the time of my visit there. It stands on the western side of the hill, and is built of a species of limestone almost equal to marble. It is adorned with sculptured work, about the doors and windows, which would do honor to the taste and skill of an architect in any land.

#### JEWISH WORSHIP.

I attended the Jewish worship at Jerusalem, and was struck with the accordance of the ceremonies with those mentioned in the New Testament. The sacred roll was brought from the chest or closet where it was kept; it was handed by an attendant to the reader; a portion of it was rehearsed; the congregation rose and stood while it was read, whereas the speaker, as well as the others present, sat during the delivery of the address which formed a part of the service. In like manner we read that the Saviour, on a certain Sabbath, at Nazareth, “went into the synagogue, and stood up to read; and there was delivered to him the book (or roll) of the prophet Isaiah; and when he had read, he closed (properly, folded up) the book, and delivered it again to the servant, and sat down;” and then proceeded to explain to the people the meaning of the Scriptures to which they had listened. See Luke 4, 16, sq.

## READING ALOUD.

I frequently encountered parties of Jews with the Hebrew Scriptures in their hands, reading them at the reputed tombs of the prophets and patriarchs, and other places regarded by them as holy. It is their custom, as it is, indeed, of the orientals generally, to read aloud, even when they do it for their own instruction only, and without any intention of being heard by others. They swing the head, and even the entire upper part of the body, from one side to the other, as they perform the act, and utter the words with a tone which comes nearer to singing or cantilation, than to our unimpassioned mode of reading.

Such appears to have been, also, the habit of persons in ancient times, when they studied or read a book in a private manner. This usage explains a circumstance in Luke's account of the interview between Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, which an occidental reader might almost look upon as a fiction, introduced to preserve the consistency of the narrative. The Evangelist approaches the chariot of the eunuch, and finds the way already provided for his entering into conversation with him, and leading his mind to those views of the gospel which result in his ready adoption of the Christian faith. The Ethiopian officer was not only reading "Esaias the prophet," but reading aloud; the Evangelist heard him, and "then opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus." Such a train of circumstances would not have attended the conversion of a man in

Italy or Greece, or any other western country. They are related as taking place in the case of the Ethiopian, because the narrative conforms to the facts; and the facts were so, and not otherwise, because the national or local customs controlled them.

#### COPYING THE SCRIPTURES.

In one of the synagogues at Safet I found a scribe engaged in making a copy of the law. A more elegant Hebrew manuscript, a more perfect specimen of the calligraphic art, I never saw, than that executed by this Jewish amanuensis. No printed page could surpass it in the beauty, symmetry and distinctness, with which the characters were drawn. One peculiarity, that struck me at once as I cast my eye over the parchment, was the horn-like appearance attached to some of the letters. I had seen the same mark, before this, in Hebrew manuscripts, but never where it was so prominent as here. The sign in question, as connected with the Hebrew letter Lamedh in particular, had almost the appearance of an intentional imitation of a ram's head. It was to that appendage of the Hebrew letters that the Saviour referred when he said, "Not one jot or little horn" (as the Greek term signifies, which our version renders "tittle"), "shall pass from the law until all be fulfilled," (Matthew 5, 18.) It was on one of the mounts in Galilee that the Saviour uttered these words; and it was exceedingly interesting to me to meet with such a proof in the same country, that copies of the old Testament are still made there, so

minutely similar to those used in the synagogues when Christ himself preached in them.

The labor expended by the Jews in copying the Scriptures, as exemplified in the preceding case, has always distinguished them, as far as we have the means of knowing what their habits in this respect have been. In one sense, at least, they appear to have been faithful to their trust, as those to whom "were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3, 2); they did not alter or mutilate the sacred text. Our Saviour charged the Jews of his time with having committed almost every sin that can be named; but he does not accuse them or their fathers of having corrupted the records of their religious faith. The rules which they follow in preparing copies of the Pentateuch for public use illustrate their vigilance in watching over the sacred books. They assign the work of transcribing them to a particular class of men who are specially trained for the service. Only one sort of parchment, and that prepared in a certain way, can be used. The ink must be of a definite kind. Every page must contain a prescribed number of lines, and every line the same number of words and letters. The slightest error vitiates a copy; a letter too much or too little on a page obliges the scribe to throw aside his work and begin anew. No copy is allowed to be read in the synagogue till it has been examined by competent men and pronounced free from every defect. The Old Testament has been handed down among the Jews, under a system of such rigid supervision. The fact is one of immense importance, as showing, in concurrence with

other facts, that the Hebrew Scriptures remain as they were written at first ; that we have in them the very words which Moses and David and Isaiah addressed to their cotemporaries, and recorded for our instruction.

#### THE TOWN OF SAFET.

I have referred so often to Safet that some account of the place may not be unacceptable to the reader. It is one of the four holy cities in Palestine, of which the Jews say that if prayer should cease to be offered in them, the world would instantly come to an end. The other three are Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias on the lake of that name. Many of the Jews hold that the Messiah will make his first appearance there, and, after a reign of forty years, go forth thence to receive the homage of the nations. It is one of the chief seats of modern Judaism. It has a Jewish population next to that of Jerusalem. It is one of the shrines which every Hebrew pilgrim to the holy land regards it as a matter of religion to visit. It is difficult to account for its enjoying such a reputation ; for it has not been identified with any city mentioned in the Old Testament, and has played no important part in Jewish history. The Rabbinic schools for which it is distinguished cannot be traced further back than the beginning of the sixteenth century. The houses of the Jews here are built on terraces, which rise in succession one above another. The roofs of each lower tier serve as a path or street to those who live in the next higher tier. Some have thought that the Saviour referred to such roofs when

he said, "Let him that is on the house-top not come down, to take anything out of his house," (Matthew 24, 17.) But the arrangement at Safet is peculiar, as far as I know, to that place. He referred, more probably, to the means of escape afforded by a stairway leading from the court to the roof. Many houses in the East have that facility, by which a person could descend and pass out of doors without entering the house. Stairs on the outside are rarely seen.

I reached Safet near the close of the day, May fifth. The tent was pitched in a grove of fig-trees and olives, on the north-west side of the hill, not far from the Jews' quarter. The elevation of the place, which is equal to that of the Mount of Olives, secures to it a pure air and a healthy climate. The cool breezes were delightful, after breathing the furnace-like atmosphere about the Sea of Tiberias. It required some effort at night to guard against the cold; but the deep slumbers which reward the traveler on such a journey for a day of strenuous labor, cause him soon to forget any trifling inconvenience of that nature.

On the highest peak of the hill stands one of the noblest ruins in Palestine. The crusaders built here a castle, on which they relied as their main defence against the incursions of the Saracens from the north. It passed repeatedly, during the holy wars, from the hands of one of the combatants to those of the other. The Turkish governor of the town had his quarters here as late as 1837. The terrible earthquake of that year gave the finishing shock to the crumbling pile. Since then, though a portion of the walls

and some of the towers are standing, it has been forsaken, except by reptiles and vultures. The prospect from this height, in a clear day, is one of the grandest which that country of hills and valleys affords. Tabor, the lesser Hermon, and the mountains of Gilead, are among the distant objects within sight. The Sea of Galilee, not less than ten or fifteen miles off, seemed, in its deep bed, as if spread out at my feet. The atmosphere was hazy at the time of my ascent to the castellated summit, and the distinctness of the view was much impaired.

#### A DISTINGUISHED RABBI.

The next morning I called on the chief Rabbi of the place, Jacob Berisch David, who has the reputation of being one of the most erudite men in Rabbinic lore of whom the Jews can boast. It was an early hour for a visit, and, being carelessly dressed on our arrival, he withdrew after bidding us welcome, and paid us the compliment of soon reappearing in a garb more befitting his age and rank. He was, apparently, near seventy years old, short in stature, but dignified, and with a head which, it is but doing him justice to say, a Raphael might have copied as a model. He had lived for some years in Europe, and had visited most parts of it. He spoke the German language with uncommon purity for a Jew. He mentioned, as one of the opinions which his school in theology maintain, that the Messiah has undergone repeated incarnations, has been born and died many times, that the world, in fact, is never without a Messiah, though

he has never yet made himself known as such. They say that the time for this revelation depends on the Jewish nation; that when they have made themselves worthy of such a blessing, by repenting of their sins and reforming, the Messiah will then throw aside his disguise, and, by indubitable signs, cause his real, but now hidden character to be known and acknowledged. An aged Jew, whom I met at Jerusalem, advanced a different view. It was that the Messiah came into the world many centuries ago, but, on account of the wickedness of men, was soon translated, without death, to Paradise, which my informant held to be a different place from heaven; there he now is, praying and suffering before the gates of Paradise, to atone for the sins of Israel, and on finishing that work will return and reign over his people. Thus it is that "their minds are blinded; that until this day the veil remaineth untaken away in their reading" of the Scriptures, (2 Corinthians 3, 14.)

#### THE LOST TRIBES.

Some years ago the Palestine Jews sent a deputation into the interior of Africa, to ascertain the truth of a report that the lost tribes had been found there. I inquired of the Rabbi respecting the result of the expedition. He replied that it was unsuccessful; that some of the party died on the way, and those who went farthest, and lived to return, heard of nothing to justify the report in question. He did not himself, he said, believe that the lost tribes existed in Africa, and though persuaded that they have kept themselves distinct

from other nations, could not say that he had any fixed opinion as to the place of their abode.

I asked him how long the Jews were accustomed to receive instruction from their Rabbies — at what age they ceased to be regarded as pupils. The relation, he said, never ceases; unless they themselves become teachers, they continue to attend the school, and rank as disciples. This custom throws light upon the common, and, no doubt, correct opinion that the apostle Paul was a pupil of Gamaliel at the time of his conversion, and long after he had arrived at the age of manhood.

#### A JEWISH FESTIVAL.

It so happened that the evening of May sixth was the anniversary of a peculiar festival at Meiron, distant about six miles; a festival which is wont to draw together many thousands of Jews, not only from all parts of the East, but from the different countries of Europe. On learning this, as it was but little out of the way, I decided to go thither and witness the celebration. As few travelers have been so fortunate as to be there at the precise time of this observance, and the strange carnival has seldom been described by an eye-witness, it will be proper for me to give some account of what I saw. It is to be feared that the transaction illustrates but too faithfully the heartlessness and indecorum which appeared so often in connection with the festivals of the ancient Hebrews, and which the prophets exposed and rebuked with so much severity.

We left Safet about the middle of the forenoon, and came

in eight minutes to Ain ez-Zeitun, Fountain of the Olives, a place justly entitled to that name. It was a goodly sight to look around upon the olives, fig-trees, almonds, lemons and pomegranates, which, favored by the soil and the climate, attained here a rare perfection. As we rode on we overtook several companies of Jewish pilgrims, some riding, but most of them on foot. A stream of them had been pouring through Safet during the night and the early hours of the forenoon. Many of them carried bundles in their hands, which excited our curiosity at the time; but the object and contents of them we did not know until the sequel of events let us into the secret. We reached Meiron in two hours.

#### TOMBS AT MEIRON.

As the principal festival was not to take place until after dark, I had an opportunity, during the interval, to examine the tombs which the Jews visit here with so much veneration. They are the reputed tombs of eminent teachers who presided over the Rabbinic schools, which flourished here in former ages. Some of them, according to the Jewish belief, lived and died before the Christian era. Here, among others, as they suppose, was buried Hillel, the grandfather of Gamaliel, Paul's teacher. For a long period of time it was the great burial-place of their most illustrious men of learning. No spot in Palestine, except Jerusalem, attracts to it so many Jewish pilgrims as Meiron.

The most remarkable tomb, so far as regards its structure, is an excavation on the south side of a hill, known as the

tomb of Rabbi Hillel and his disciples. It is cut out of the solid rock. The entrance is through a narrow door, which obliges one to stoop. According to a rough measurement, I found the dimensions to be some twenty-five feet long, eighteen wide, and ten high. There were thirty niches for the reception of bodies. Some of them were so arranged as evidently to distinguish their occupants above their fellows. In several of them were stone sarcophagi of immense weight, the lids of which, ornamented with sculptured figures, were partially slipped aside. No trace of any remains of the dead was to be found. The bottom of the cave was covered with two or more feet of water, and I was obliged to mount on the back of a man, in order to make my examinations. The Jew who performed the service for me, took up with his hands some of the water from the graves, and drank it as an act of pious homage to the dead.

#### DIVERSIONS.

But the tombs which they more especially venerate are three tombs at the end of a stone edifice which encloses an open parallelogram, about an hundred feet long and fifty wide. This was the great point of rendezvous. The apartment over the graves, a sort of oratory, was hung with burning lamps and crowded with worshippers. A spreading fig-tree stood in the centre of the court and furnished an agreeable shade. Around the sides of the court were alcoves or stalls, which were filled with people, along with their beds and other traveling equipments. Intoxicating drink was

furnished abundantly and abundantly used; for some of the men were plainly under the influence of it even while they stood praying at the graves of their rabbies. Various amusements were constantly going on. In one quarter was a crowd gathered around a couple of swordsmen, who, while they sought to parry each other's thrusts, brandished their weapons in such a manner as to keep time with the cymbals which others were beating; a double contest, in which the performers had to show their skill as fencers and musicians in the same exercise. In another quarter was a group of dancers, in which the old man of seventy turned with what agility he could in the same gyrations with young men and boys; while the spectators sung and clapped their hands in harmony with the movement. The clapping of hands, which is so often mentioned in the Old Testament, I observed on other occasions, as well as on this. The practice maintains its place still among the musical entertainments in which the people of the East delight.

#### LOCAL TRADITIONS.

A deep ravine separates the hills of Meiron from a high ridge on the opposite side. I descended into this ravine to a beautiful fountain, sunk a few feet below the ground and loosely walled up with stones. A sparkling rivulet issues from it and flows toward the east. The Jews whom I met here said that this was Deborah's fountain; because that heroine bathed here on the morning when she went forth to fight with Sisera. Mount Tabor, at the foot of which the battle

was fought, may be seen from these hills of Galilee; and the mountaineers who descended from them into the plain of Jezreel, were among those who helped to achieve the victory. See Judges 4, 6, sq. Within sight, on a neighboring hill, was a pillar of stone, which the Jews said was Elijah's seat, because he was accustomed to rest there as he journeyed through this region. He will come again a second time, they remarked to me, and will then change the pillar into gold. Here we have a trace of the opinion, in respect to which the Jews in Christ's time were so tenacious, that one of the antecedents of the Messianic age was that "Elias must first come," (Matthew 17, 10.) Their mistake was that they expected a literal return of the prophet, instead of the appearance of one who should manifest his "spirit and power." The pillar is supposed to be the fragment of a pagan temple; but by whom built, or when, is unknown.

#### THE CELEBRATION.

The ceremony forming the climax of the festival, which the Jews had met here to celebrate, consisted of the burning of costly gifts in honor of their ancient teachers. It took place within the court of the building of which I have already spoken. Soon after dark, the crowd, which, during the afternoon had been scattered hither and thither, assembled here, filling the court, the stalls and the gallery or corridor overhanging the court. The entire space was crowded almost to suffocation. A pillar, supporting a stone trough or basin, stood at one corner of the gallery, where every eye

could see it. Near this basin was placed a vessel with oil, in which the articles to be burnt were first dipped, to render them inflammable. At a given signal, a man with a blazing torch mounted the stairs leading to the gallery. At the sight of this the hum of voices ceased; every one looked eagerly in that direction. It was evident that all were intent with expectation. The first article burnt was a costly shawl; the offering of a rich Jew from Jaffa, who was said to have paid one thousand and five hundred piastres, about seventy-five dollars, for the privilege of opening the ceremony. The shawl was dipped in the oil, lifted to the basin, and the torch applied to it. As it began to blaze the multitude raised a shout which made the welkin ring; the men clapped their hands, and the women shrieked out the sharp, quavering note of joy which one hears only in those eastern lands. The light thus suddenly flashed on the eyes of the beholders revealed a curious spectacle in the gallery which overhung three sides of the court. Men, women and children, were crowded together there in solid masses, occupying different attitudes, some standing, others sitting or crouching beneath the green booths erected to shelter them from the dew by night, and the heat by day. They were variously dressed in the many-shaped costumes of the lands represented by them; for they had come from homes under almost every sky from the equator to the poles. The darkness had hitherto concealed them, in a measure; they could be seen through the shades only in dim outline. But now, as the dazzling flame leaped from the trough, and threw its searching light over

the crowd, the obscurity passed away; the figures of the motley group started at once into view, and gave peculiar animation to the scene. Other offerings, as shawls, scarfs, handkerchiefs, books, were brought forward, dipped in oil and consumed in like manner; while from time to time, as an article was seen to be specially rich, or burned with uncommon brilliancy, the spectators broke forth into renewed expressions of delight. At length, another basin was prepared at the opposite corner of the gallery, and gifts were thrown, also, into that. The work went on with unabated vigor until it became so late that I was obliged to retire; and I was told in the morning that it continued through the greater part of the night.

#### RUINS OF A SYNAGOGUE.

Before starting the next morning, May seventh, I went to see some interesting ruins, which were said to occur not far from our encampment. A walk of a few minutes brought me to the remains of what must have been once a splendid edifice, dating, in all probability, from the time when the great masters of Rabbinic learning lived and taught here. The outline of the façade may still be traced, and one of the walls is comparatively perfect. The door-posts consist of single blocks of stone, nearly ten feet high. A rocky precipice, cut down, apparently, to some extent for the purpose, formed one side of the edifice. A few sculptured ornaments have escaped the ravages of time. The building stones are of great thickness, and several large columns lie prostrate

in the neighborhood. On my return I met a company of Jews, who were going to the same place, of whom I inquired what they supposed the object of the structure had been. They replied in German, "*Es ist die Schule*," by which they meant a Jewish school, or synagogue; and thus gave me, no doubt, the national tradition respecting the locality.

#### THE HILLS OF GALILEE.

It was a little past six o'clock, A. M., as we set forth again from Meiron. Our destination was the sea-coast, in the region of Akka and Carmel. As affording a glimpse of the beautiful land of Galilee, the scene of so much of the personal history of the Saviour and the apostles, I subjoin a part of the record of this day's journey. We struck down the steep hill into the Wady on the south, crossed the sparkling brook at the bottom of it, and, bearing toward the east, reascended on the opposite side. We pursued our way here over a ridge of high ground, thickly set with low trees and bushes, resembling very much the more open parts of our New England. The Sea of Tiberias, of which we had lost sight at Meiron, was in view again for some time. We passed, now and then, shepherds tending their flocks, which consisted of goats as well as sheep; the former remarkable for their long ears, which almost rested on the ground, as they cropped the grass. In proceeding so far to the east we went, in one sense, out of our way; but the object was to pass around a high range of hills, instead of crossing them,

and then turn on the other side to the south-west, which was our proper direction.

Having gained this position, our course, for the remainder of the day's journey, lay along the bottom of a somewhat broad depression between two parallel lines of hills; a depression which had, in general, the character of a plain, sloping gradually towards the south-west. At one point the ground rose considerably, and the hills came nearer to each other, so as to seem at a distance to enclose the valley on that side; but, just beyond this apparent boundary, we found that the hills fell apart again, and the ground descended, at times, more sharply than before, till it sank down into the plain about Akka. The sides of the hills were well wooded with bushes and with trees of a moderate height; while the intermediate tract along which we traveled was highly cultivated. The olive groves here were the noblest that I saw in Palestine. Some of the trees, judging from their gnarled and decayed trunks, must have been as old as those regarded as so ancient at the foot of Olivet. They were in blossom at the time, and the flower gave to them a beauty which that tree does not ordinarily possess. We crossed one copious stream, which descended from the hills on the right, and disappeared among the gardens and orchards near a village on the left. I retain a delightful impression of this Galilean Tempe, if I may so call it. The hills which enclose it on either side, seemed, at some points, almost to mingle with the sky. It was easy to think of them as nature's palisades, erected for fencing out the world's cares and alarms, from this

quiet retreat. A Sabbath stillness rested on the scene. The people were pursuing their labors at a distance, and we met but one party of travelers. Field and forest were clothed with verdure. Though the sun was hot, the heat was tempered by a gentle breeze. I could not keep out of mind Johnson's description of the happy valley, in his *Rasselas*. The tranquillity of the scene, the rural beauty and seclusion of the place, forced on me that remembrance.

The villages which we passed on the way were Kefr Berim, Semuy, Rameh, Neekev, and Mejd el-Kerum. At this last place the ruins of a synagogue, similar to those at Meiron, are said to be found. This part of Galilee belonged to the tribe of Naphtali; and it admits of no doubt that Rameh marks the site of the Ramah mentioned in Joshua 19, 36, as one of the cities of that tribe. It is to be distinguished from a place of the same name which belonged to Asher, (Joshua 19, 29). A Neekeb (Joshua 19, 33), which sounds like Neekev, was another of the towns of Naphtali. We had pursued here the track which the ancient caravans followed (it was the maritime route) in passing between Damascus and Egypt.

At three o'clock in the afternoon we encamped in an olive grove, near a small village called Beroe, on the border of the plain of Akka, and to the east of that city. Our tents were pitched behind a slight eminence which cut off the view towards the south and west; but by ascending that, distant but a few rods, we could see the Mediterranean, Akka, the monastery on Carmel, and the whole expanse of the beauti-

ful plain at the foot of that mountain. Beroe is put down on Ritter's map, but has been generally overlooked. The villagers, as they returned home at evening, stopped to look at us, but showed themselves civil and friendly. Of the flies I cannot speak so favorably; they exceeded in number, size and ferocity, any specimens of the kind that ever fell in my way. The low, marshy ground in the vicinity may have caused them to swarm so abundantly just here.

## CHAPTER VII.

### JERUSALEM AND ITS ENVIRONS.

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#### THE FIRST VIEW.

“OF earthly sights,” wrote Dr. Arnold,\* “Rome ranks as the third, Athens and Jerusalem are the other two; — the three people of God’s election, two for things temporal, and one for things eternal. Yet, even in things eternal, the two former were allowed to minister.” It had already been my privilege to spend a month in the capital of the Roman world; it was reserved for me, on my return from the East, to linger for a while in the ancient home of Attic arts and learning; but now, on the afternoon of April the second, I was about to behold the greatest of these “earthly sights” — Jerusalem, “the city of the great King” — the scene of events the greatest that have entered into human history. I will presume on sufficient sympathy between myself and the reader to allow myself to state exactly how I felt at that moment. Our approach was along the Jaffa road, from the

\* As he was approaching Rome. See his *Life and Correspondence*, by Mr. Stanley (Am. ed.), p. 496.

north-west. I knew, from the changing aspect of the country, which grew wilder and wilder as we ascended one height after another, that we could not be far from the limit of our journey. I have read of many travelers, who, on approaching the holy city, have been impatient to obtain the first view; who have hurried forward to outstrip their companions, and be the first to cry "Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" My impulse was just the reverse of this. I fell back into the rear of the company, allowed the others to precede me, turned my face, in fact, for a while, in the opposite direction; and, though I had then only to lift up my eyes, and gratify a desire which had been for years one of the strongest of my heart, and which had incited me to cross seas and continents, I shrank, at last, from giving up the Jerusalem of my imagination for a reality, which, I knew too well, must be attended with some disappointment. The truth is, no place of which we have read and thought much can correspond exactly with our anticipations; and, though it may prove, after a fuller acquaintance, to be as worthy of our interest and admiration as we had supposed, yet, if it differs at first sight from our previous notions, that difference itself diminishes our pleasure, and causes us to feel disappointed. Yet, after all, the first sight of Jerusalem, though it may not turn out to be the exact original of the picture in the traveler's mind, is novel and interesting. As seen from the direction in which we advanced, it appears to lie on the side of a hill sloping towards the east. The walls, notched with battlements, the entire circuit of which lies at once beneath the eye; the tur-

rets of the Church of the Sepulchre; the minarets; the lofty cupola of the Mosque of Omar; the towering castle of David; the domes and terraced roofs of the houses; come suddenly into view, and produce a startling effect. It should be added that the bold form of Olivet, as it rises over the city, on the left, and the distant hills of Moab in dim perspective, belong to the scene which greets the eye from this particular position.

#### WHAT IS PROPOSED.

Jerusalem was the great point of central interest to the ancient people of God, both in a civil and a religious sense. The Psalmist (122, 1, sq.) recognizes these two grounds of attachment to the capital, in the words which he puts into the mouth of the Hebrew pilgrims :

“ I rejoice in those who say to me,  
‘ Unto the house of Jehovah we will go.’  
Standing now are our feet  
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem !  
Whither go up the tribes,  
The tribes of Jehovah, as prescribed to Israel,  
To give thanks unto the name of Jehovah.  
For there are set thrones of judgment,  
The thrones of the house of David.  
For the sake of the house of Jehovah, our God,  
I will seek thy welfare.”

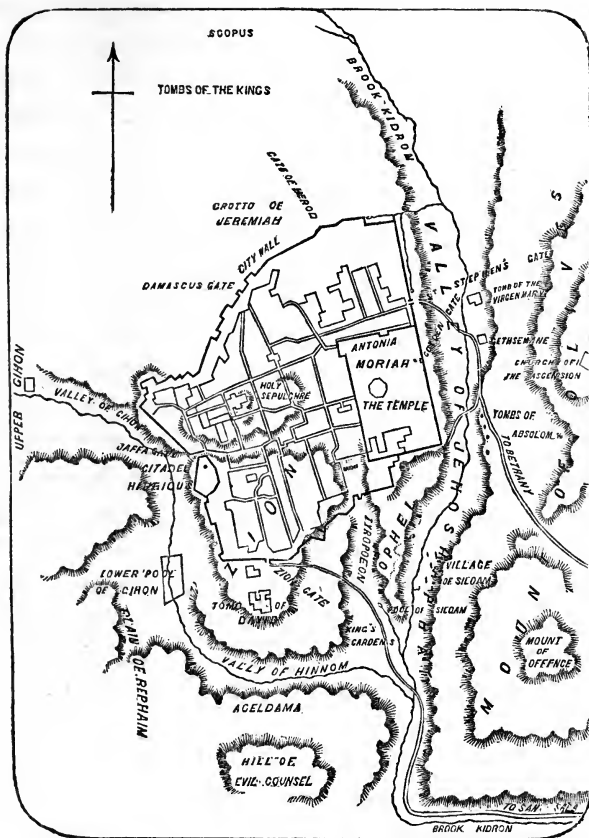
So, also, at the present time, no place in the Bible engages the reader's attention so often as the holy city. The leading narratives of the Old Testament, the journeys of the Saviour,

the tragic events connected with his death, his ascension, the first conflicts and triumphs of the gospel, all conduct us to Jerusalem as the great scene of the transactions which give interest and importance to the sacred record. Every person must be anxious to form in his mind a distinct image of so remarkable a place. It may be useful to set apart a few pages to the attempt to gratify that desire. The difficulty will be to select judiciously from so wide a field the points best entitled to be made prominent in a rapid sketch. The material here is so copious that it would be easy to write a volume, if another volume were needed, on this single topic. I aim at nothing beyond a general outline of the subject. For the sake of guarding against the confusion which is apt to arise from too great a multiplicity of particulars, we may pass over entirely the perplexed questions of archeologists, so important in their place, as well as the minute details which modify, of course, all general statements. I rely on books for a few statistical data; but, otherwise, shall endeavor to transfer to the reader the picture of Jerusalem and its environs, which a survey of the scene has imprinted on my own mind.

## SITE OF JERUSALEM.

The situation of Jerusalem is remarkably unique, and may be understood the more easily on that account. We are to conceive of the mountains which extend from the plain of Esdraelon to the southern borders of Palestine, as sinking down with some abruptness, near the point where they attain

their greatest elevation, and spreading themselves out into a moderate plateau. This plain is cut off from the adjacent country on three sides, — namely, the east, west and south, — by deep valleys; while on the north it is connected, by a level tract, with the higher ground in that direction. Jerusalem occupies the space so nearly enclosed by these valleys; it stands on what may be called a tongue, or projection, of one of the mountains of Judea. The eastern valley begins on the north-west; but, on reaching the north-east corner of the city, changes its course, and runs nearly north and south. This is the valley of the Kedron, as it is called in the Old Testament, or of Jehoshaphat, a later name, which was derived, probably, from a false interpretation of Joel 3, 2. The western valley, known as Gihon, approaches the city from the north-west, flows to the south as far as the south-western extremity of Zion, where it turns abruptly to the east, and passes along the south of Jerusalem, until it intersects the valley of Jehoshaphat. In the latter part of its course it bends more and more to the east, and for a short distance runs parallel to the valley from the north into which it falls. This extension of Gihon, on the south of Jerusalem, is called Hinnom. The ground on which the city stands rises into three or four eminences, the principal ones of which are Mount Zion on the west, and Moriah, on the east, with a depression between them, the ancient Tyropœan, which falls into the valley of Hinnom on the south. Jerusalem occupies nearly the highest point of land between the Jordan and the Mediterranean; distant about twenty-five miles from the former, and thirty-



PLAN OF JERUSALEM.

five from the latter. The water-shed of the region occurs about two miles to the west. It lies in latitude  $31^{\circ} 47'$  north, and longitude  $35^{\circ} 13'$  east from Greenwich.

The present walls of the city embrace a circuit of about two miles and a half. They stand, generally, as near the edge of the valleys as the ground will allow; except that a part of Moriah known as Ophel, and the southern extremity of Zion, are now outside of the city. The figure which the walls describe is an irregular oblong; the more extended sides running from east to west. They vary in height from twenty to fifty feet, as the surface of the ground may require. The present walls are not older than the sixteenth century. They are furnished with turrets and loop-holes, but would afford little security against the present mode of warfare.

The city has four gates at present in use, which look towards the cardinal points; namely, the Jaffa gate on the west, the Damascus gate on the north, that of St. Stephen on the east, and Mount Zion's on the south. The first two receive their names from the cities to which the roads that start from them lead; the third is so called from a tradition that the first Christian martyr was put to death in that quarter; and the fourth, from its situation, on Mount Zion. Three or four smaller gates have been closed up, which are now seldom or never opened.

No one can doubt that the ancient Jerusalem enclosed a wider circuit than the modern town. It included, no doubt, the whole of Zion and Moriah and a portion of the open country on the north-west side, where the ruins of houses

are still found which must have belonged to the city. It had two walls in the days of Christ, except where the precipitous banks were supposed to render one wall a sufficient protection; and, shortly before the siege of Titus, it was strengthened by a third wall, added by Herod Agrippa. Its position in the heart of a mountainous country, its distance from the great thoroughfares of commerce and migration, and its almost impregnable strength, in consequence of the ravines around it, preserved the existence of the Jewish capital for a period of time almost unequalled in the history of nations. Its final conquest and destruction were effected only by the last efforts of Roman courage and power. Titus, the victor, was compelled to own that a divine arm interposed in his behalf.\*

#### THE CHANGES OF TIME.

The circumstance which might be supposed at first thought to afford the chief pleasure of a visit to Jerusalem is not the one, in fact, which fulfils that expectation. It would be gratifying, certainly, to be able to identify the exact places which the events of Scripture have rendered memorable. It is impossible, however, to do this, except in a few cases. Traditions, it is true, are current among the oriental Christians, which profess to give us all the information on such points that any one could desire. Some of them may be well founded; no reflecting person would reject them all as alike worthless. But, in general, such traditions are nothing

\* The Roman writers record his declaration that, unless the gods had fought against the Jews, he could never have taken their city.

but vague conjectures; they are incapable of being traced back far enough to give them the value of historical testimony, and often are contradicted by facts known to us from the Bible, and other sources, or clash with other traditions maintained with equal confidence. Very few spots exist at Jerusalem, or in the neighborhood, to which the traveler can turn his steps, and feel, as he stands there, that he is looking upon the undoubted scene of this or that particular occurrence, of which we read with so much interest in the sacred volume.

Nor can any one reasonably be surprised at this fact. "No ancient city," says Von Raumer, "not excepting Rome itself, has undergone (since the age of Christ) so many changes as Jerusalem. Not only houses, palaces, temples, have been demolished, rebuilt and destroyed anew, but entire hills on which the city stood have been dug down, and valleys filled up."\* When the Episcopal church was built, a few years ago, on Mount Zion, it was found necessary, as I was told, to dig through the accumulated rubbish to the depth of forty feet or more, in order to obtain a proper support for the foundations. But, although such alterations impair or destroy our means of identifying particular places, we can yet feel assured, as we look around us at Jerusalem, that within the space of a few miles, at least, all those great events occurred which give to that city its world-wide interest. Especially do the objects and aspects of nature remain unchanged. Olivet, Moriah, Zion, the valleys, rocks,

\* Palästina, von Karl von Raumer (1850), p. 252.

fields, the nearer and more distant scenery, are still there, just as they met the view of those whose names are so imperishably connected with them. It is such general reflections that the traveler finds it the most interesting to entertain. He feels that he secures the great reward of his journey, if he can obtain a fresh and vivid impression of natural objects, of the permanent features of the country, the various points of contrast or agreement which that part of the world offers, as compared with what we observe or miss here at home.

I remained at Jerusalem nearly four weeks; and sought, during that time, to make myself familiar, first, with the objects of interest around the city, and, secondly, with the remains of Hebrew and Christian antiquity within it. Let us now traverse rapidly the same ground anew; glancing, as we proceed, which is all that can be done within our present limits, at the prominent points of view, and the places of chief interest which engage the observer's attention on the spot.

#### VIEW FROM ST. STEPHEN'S GATE.

Threading our way through the narrow streets of the city, we arrive at St. Stephen's gate, on the east side, and commence our circuit there. Passing out, we stop, for a moment, under the walls, and look around us. Opposite to us, across the narrow valley on the edge of which we stand, rises the Mount of Olives. It stretches so far from north to south as to intercept entirely the view towards the east. The top is not level, but notched with three summits; the middle one of which is the highest, crowned with a cluster

of buildings, prominent among which is a small mosque with a minaret. This central height is pointed out as the scene of the ascension; and a chapel stands there, consecrated to the memory of that event. Three paths, deeply worn, lead over the mount. The middle one goes directly to Bethany, on the eastern side, the home of Lazarus, to which the Saviour retired so often during his visits to Jerusalem; the one further to the south leaves that village a little on the left, and is the road to Jericho and the Jordan. We gaze at those paths the more intently because we can have no doubt that the feet of the Saviour trode them again and again, as he approached the city or left it. That reflection came over me with such power, as my eyes fell upon them for the first time, that I could not refrain from weeping. Olivet has shared in the general neglect which has converted so much of the country into a desert. It is naturally susceptible of high cultivation. It must have been adorned, anciently, with fields of grain, groves and orchards. At present it exhibits, on the whole, a desolate appearance. Rocky ledges crop out, here and there, above the surface, and give to the hill a broken, sterile aspect. The loose soil, which might otherwise cover them in part, is left to be washed away. Yet, the mount is not wholly destitute of verdure even now. A few spots are planted with grain; and fruit-trees, as almonds, figs, pomegranates, olives, are scattered up and down its sides. The olives take the lead, decidedly, and thus vindicate the propriety of the ancient name. A shepherd, watching a few sheep or goats, emerges now and then

into view, and gives diversity to the scene. From our position at the gate we see distinctly the enclosure of Gethsemane, at the foot of the mount.

Just at our left, under the wall, is a large reservoir, where several men are raising water for their horses and other animals, by means of a windlass, with a jar or bucket attached to it. The people come hither, also, to bathe. The water here was sufficient for that purpose as late as the beginning of April. On our right lies a Mohammedan cemetery, which covers a great part of the eastern slope of Moriah in that quarter.

#### THE BROOK KEDRON.

Leaving now our station, we go forward, and, at the distance of a few rods, begin to descend the steep bank before us, into the valley of the Kedron. On our way we pass the spot said to have been stained by the blood of the martyr Stephen. From the edge of this slope to the bottom the distance is about four hundred feet; the actual height may be one hundred feet. The valley, which we now cross, runs from north to south, overlooked by the walls of the city on the west, and the ridge of Olivet on the east. In two or three minutes we come to a bridge, or causeway, over the dry bed of the Kedron. The stream which bears this name makes its appearance at a point a little south of Jerusalem, and runs thence in winter to the Dead Sea. The part of the gulley opposite to the city contains no water, unless a little may be found there for a short time after a heavy rain.\*

\* An American friend, who had resided at Jerusalem through the

The brook belongs properly to the southern part of the glen, but gives name to its entire course. On the right hand and left, just before we step on the bridge, several fig-trees and olives shade our path. The valley, as we look up from this point towards the north, becomes wider and less abrupt, but on the other side contracts itself, in consequence of the nearer approach of Olivet and Moriah to each other. Beyond the bridge we pass, on the left hand, a chapel built over a deep grotto, known as the tomb of the Virgin. On one occasion I attended a religious service here at early dawn. The sight of so much splendor in such a place surprised me. A galaxy of lamps of massive silver, suspended from the roof, poured their mingled light through the cavern; the offerings, no doubt, of rich devotees from the Catholic lands of Europe. Subterranean passages branch out from this grotto in various directions. A large tree, with outstretched branches, stands in front of it, where a group of loungers may be seen at almost all hours.

#### GETHSEMANE.

Following now a path which turns a little to the south, at the distance of eight or ten rods beyond the bridge we reach the north end of the garden of Gethsemane. The ground begins to rise here, and we stand at the western foot of Olivet. It is the spot above every other which the visitor must be anxious to see. It is the one which I sought winter, and had kept an eye on this matter, stated to me that he had never seen any water there at any time.

out before any other, on my arrival at Jerusalem, and the one of which I took my last formal view on the morning of my departure. The tradition which places the agony and betrayal of the Saviour here has a great amount of evidence in its support. Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, who lived almost early enough to have taken by the hand some aged Christian who had seen the companions of the apostles, speaks of the garden as well known; and Jerome, about fifty years later, repeats the same testimony, and describes the situation of the spot in accordance with the present locality. There is no proof that the tradition has ever wavered. The indications in the New Testament favor entirely the same view. When it is said that "Jesus went forth with his disciples beyond the brook Kedron, where was a garden" (John 18, 1), it is implied that he did not go far up the Mount of Olives, but reached the place which he had in view soon after crossing the bed of that stream. The garden is named in that passage with reference to the brook, and not the mountain.

The space enclosed as Gethsemane contains about one third of an acre, and is surrounded by a low wall, covered with white stucco. It is entered by a gate, kept under lock and key, under the control of one of the convents at Jerusalem. The eight olive-trees here are evidently very aged; most of them, though they are still verdant and productive, are so decayed that heaps of stones have been piled up against their trunks, to keep them from being blown down by the wind. Trees of this class are remarkably long-lived, and it is not impossible that those now here may have sprung from

the roots of those which grew there in the days of Christ.\* Other olive-trees, apparently quite as old, occur just beyond the limits of the enclosure. It may be allowed that the original garden may have been more or less extensive than the present site, or have stood a few rods further to the north or the south ; but far, certainly, from that spot it need not be supposed to have been. We may sit down there, and read the affecting narrative of what the Saviour endured for our redemption, and feel assured that we are near the place where he prayed, “ saying, Father, not my will, but thine be done ;” and where, “ being in an agony, he sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.”

“ He bows beneath the sins of men ;  
He cries to God, and cries again,  
In sad Gethsemane ;  
He lifts his mournful eyes above —  
‘ My Father, can this cup remove ? ’

“ With gentle resignation still,  
He yielded to his Father’s will  
In sad Gethsemane ;  
‘ Behold me here, thine only Son ;  
And, Father, let thy will be done.’

“ The Father heard ; and angels, there,  
Sustained the Son of God in prayer,  
In sad Gethsemane ;  
He drank the dreadful cup of pain —  
Then rose to life and joy again.” †

\* See Schubert’s *Reise in das Morgenland*, Vol. III., p. 521.

† The author of these lines is the Rev. S. F. Smith, D. D.

The garden has a reservoir, which supplies water for moistening the ground, and cultivating a few flowers. A series of rude pictures may be seen on the interior face of the wall, representing different scenes in the history of Christ's passion, such as the scourging, the mockery of the soldiers, the sinking beneath the cross, and the like. As I sat beneath the olives, and observed how very near the city was, with what perfect ease a person there could survey at a glance the entire length of the eastern wall, and the slope of the hill towards the valley, I could not divest myself of the impression that this local peculiarity should be allowed to explain a passage in the account of the Saviour's apprehension. Every one must have noticed something abrupt in his summons to the disciples—"Arise, let us be going; see, he is at hand that doth betray me," (Matthew 26, 46.) It is not improbable that his watchful eye, at that moment, caught sight of Judas and his accomplices, as they issued from one of the eastern gates, or turned round the northern or southern corner of the walls, in order to descend into the valley. Even if the night was dark,\* he could have seen the torches which they carried, and could have felt no uncertainty respecting the object of such a movement at that unseasonable hour. This view is not necessary to the explanation of the passage, but it is a natural one, and supplies a connection between the language and the external circumstances, which augments exceedingly the graphic power of the narrative.

As I was passing near Gethsemane one day, I saw, at a

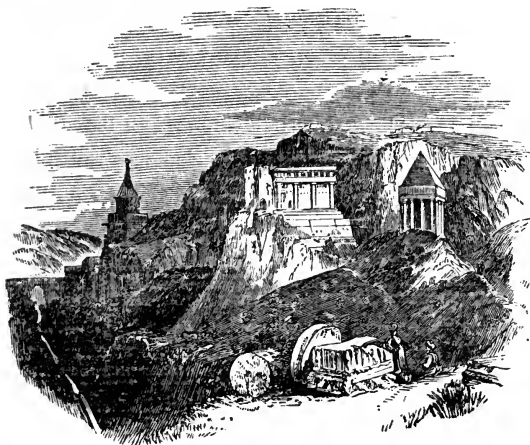
\* But see the remarks on page 139.

little distance, a shepherd engaged in shearing one of his flock. The animal lay stretched before him on the ground; submitting, without resistance or complaint, to the operation which he was performing. It seemed as if every movement of the shears would lacerate the flesh; the feet were bound; the man's knees were pressed rudely against the sides of the helpless captive. This posture, so irksome, had to be endured for a considerable time before the ample fleece was removed. Yet, during it all, it was wonderful to observe how patient the creature remained; it struggled not, opened not its mouth. Under ordinary circumstances the incident might not have attracted my attention; but, being seen in such a place, it spoke to my heart with touching power. How could I forget the prophet's use of that emblem, in describing the spirit of unshrinking submission to appointed suffering, which was to distinguish the Saviour of men, and of which he gave such matchless proof in the agony of the garden! Isaiah (53, 7) said, with reference to that trait of his character, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

#### TOMBS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT.

Leaving Gethsemane, we go down the valley, along a path a little to the east of the Kedron, and, in a few minutes, come to a cluster of remarkable tombs on our left. They have the form of beautiful temples; and two of them, instead of being constructed of stones laid upon each other,

have been sculptured out of the rock in one solid mass. The most perfect of them is known as the tomb of Absalom; who, having no posterity, is said to have "reared for himself a pillar in the king's dale, to keep his name in remembrance," (2 Samuel 18, 18). One of them is called the tomb of Zacharias, the martyr of that name, who was "slain between the temple and the altar," (Matthew 23, 25). Another is commonly marked as the cave of St. James, because he is said to have taken refuge there on the night of the betrayal. The structures are, undoubtedly, ancient; but show a style of decoration not earlier than the Roman age. It is possible that they may be older, and that the embellishments were added at a later period.



The ground behind these tombs, along the base and up the sides of Olivet, glitters with the white slabs, which cover the graves of the Jews buried there. The stones are slightly

elevated, and marked with Hebrew inscriptions. This is their great cemetery; the one in which they esteem it so great a privilege to be interred.\* Still further back on the hill occurs a labyrinth of tombs, singularly intricate, which extend for a great distance under ground; they are called the Tombs of the Prophets, though for what reason is unknown. At the point where we now are the Valley of Jehoshaphat is narrower than in any other part.

#### FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN.

Off against the Pillar of Absalom we cross an arch over the bed of the Kedron to the western side. A path here leads up the steep bank of Moriah to the south-east corner of the Haram, or enclosure of the mosque, so that we are now opposite to the south end of the city. The level of the city is not less than a hundred and fifty feet above us. We go forward again down the valley, and, at the distance of about fifteen hundred feet, come to the mouth of a remarkable pool on our right, which lies in the bosom of an immense rock. It is evidently artificial, cut into the eastern side of Ophel, as the part of Moriah which projects out of the walls is here called. Two flights of steps — the first sixteen, the second thirteen, with a plane of twelve feet between them — lead down to the water. The depth below the level of the valley is twenty-five feet. The source of the water is a mystery. It is probably connected, in some way, with a system of aqueducts or fountains, under the temple

\* See page 219.

mount, which has not yet been explored. The water flows off through a subterranean passage under the hill, into a pool on the opposite side. The fountain has been observed to rise and fall at frequent intervals; though it was not my good fortune to observe any instance of that fluctuation. The basin is fifteen feet long, and five or six feet wide. The people resort to this place to fill their skins or jars with water; and, in hot weather, make no scruple to use it as a bath. The style of the work must convince every one that it was constructed by Jewish hands; and it is not strange that attempts have been made to identify it with some one of the pools mentioned in the Scriptures. It has borne, at different times, the name of almost every one of them. Some of the opinions on this subject are certainly false, and the others are nothing more than conjectures.

## THE POOL OF SILOAM.

Setting forth again, we pursue still the path between the Kedron and the base of Ophel. On the other side of the valley, along the foot of Olivet, lies a small Arab village, called Silwan, though scattered over considerable ground. The people here live in miserable huts, some of which, in fact, are sepulchres hewn in the rocks, where the ancient inhabitants of Jerusalem buried their dead. Near here, as the name of the place indicates, must have stood that tower of Siloam, of which we read that it "fell, and slew eighteen persons," (Luke 13, 4). This part of Olivet, the southern extremity, is called, usually, the Mount of Offence; because

Solomon and some of the later kings are said to have practised there the abominations of idolatry.

Having advanced about fourteen hundred feet, we now turn around the sharp point of Ophel, to the right, and see before us the valley of the Tyropæon, the depression, or recess, between Moriah and Zion, on the south of the city. Here, at the base of Ophel, where it rises to the height of forty or fifty feet, in a slight channel, cut in the rocky bottom for the purpose, a streamlet murmurs gently along, sparkling in the sunbeams. This is the rill which Milton has made so familiar to us as

——— “Siloah’s brook, that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God.”

Isaiah (8, 6) speaks of “the waters of Shiloah, that go softly.” Who can doubt that he referred to the same peculiarity of the tranquil flow of the current, which is so observable at present? We follow this stream a few steps towards the north-west, and come then to the Pool of Siloam, out of which it flows. Josephus mentions a pool of this name, and describes it as situated precisely here; so that no doubt can exist as to its being the Pool of Siloam, to which our Saviour sent the blind man to wash for the recovery of his sight, (John 9, 7.) The water issues first from an excavation in the side of Ophel, and then passes into a reservoir, at the distance of a few feet. Some broken columns, and other fragments, show that an edifice, probably a church, was formerly built over this pool. It contained, when I saw it,

two feet of water.\* A zig-zag passage, cut through the solid rock, nearly two thousand feet in length, connects Siloam with the Fountain of the Virgin, on the opposite side of Ophel. The same stream, of course, supplies both fountains. The brook of Siloah, after running a few rods to the east, irrigates a plantation of fruit-trees and vegetables; it is the most fertile spot in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Here, no doubt, was the "king's garden," of which Nehemiah speaks (3, 15) as near the "pool of Siloah."

#### FORMER RESERVOIRS.

We turn a little to the east from the pool, and cross a causeway towards the south, built up against the mouth of the Tyropœon, where it falls into the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The ground here indicates incontestably that one or more reservoirs existed formerly above this dam, which may have been filled with water partly from the winter rains, and partly from the pool of Siloam. A writer who lived about A. D. 600 mentions one of them as a place to which the people had free access, at certain hours, for the purpose of swimming and bathing.† The basin could be distinctly traced as late as the close of the sixteenth century. Dr. Robinson remarks that it was probably ancient. The space is now filled up with earth and cultivated.

\* The length of the reservoir is given as fifty-three feet, the breadth as eighteen, and the depth as nineteen.

† See Tobler's *Siloahquelle und der Oelberg* (1852), p. 32.

## WELL OF EN-ROGEL.

Just below this causeway is the point where the valley of Hinnom, which runs from west to east on the south of Jerusalem, falls into the valley of Jehoshaphat. We pass that point a short distance, and come to a well, which can be no other than the En-Rogel of Scripture. It is a living fountain, sunk to a great depth in the earth. It is mentioned (Joshua 15, 7. 10) as one of the boundaries between Judah and Benjamin. Adonijah and his accomplices were feasting here when Solomon was proclaimed king, and, as would be so perfectly easy at that distance, heard the shout of the people which rent the city on that occasion. See 1 Kings 1, 9, sq. The trees and gardens which surround us here give to the place a cheerful aspect. Here is the proper head of the brook Kedron. After the rains of winter the water issues from the ground, in two places, and gradually swells into a torrent, which plunges over its rocky bed through the wild ravine, until it enters the Dead Sea. This well is said to have concealed the fire of the temple during the period of the captivity, and is sometimes called Nehemiah's well, because he is supposed to have recovered the fire thence, on the return from the exile. The natives call it, also, Joab's well, possibly on account of his participation in the conspiracy of Adonijah.

## VALLEY OF HINNOM.

Retracing our steps to the point of intersection, we turn to the west, and soon enter the narrow gorge which protects

Jerusalem on the south. The scene here is almost terrific, both in its aspect and its associations. It is the ancient Hinnom, or Gehenna, where a perpetual fire was kept burning, to consume the offal and rubbish thrown out of the city; and where the idolatrous Hebrew kings caused children to be sacrificed to Moloch. A wall of frowning rocks and precipices hangs over us on the left, and the southern extremity of Zion rises so steeply on the right that one must almost look up into the zenith in order to scale the top of it with the eye. Tradition has named the hill on the left the Hill of Evil Council, because Judas is said to have met the Jewish priests in a house there, for the purpose of concerting measures to betray the Saviour to them. The rocky sides of this hill are full of sepulchres, now unused, except as shepherds occasionally resort to them with their flocks for shelter. The expense and labor lavished upon many of them indicate that they were appropriated once to the interment of the wealthier families of the city. One afternoon I wandered out alone, and spent some hours in exploring these gloomy abodes of the dead. It so happened that no person appeared anywhere within sight; no voice or footfall of any living thing reached the ear; a silence profound as the grave reigned around me; and, as I looked into one tomb after another, and surrendered my mind to the thoughts which the genius of the place would naturally awaken, I found myself oppressed, at length, with a feeling so desolate and horror-stricken, that it was a relief to get through with

my task, and come forth where I could see and hear again the sights and sounds of a living world.

#### THE DEATH OF JUDAS.

As we pass the rocky heights of Hinnom we are reminded of the miserable end of the traitor. Matthew states (27, 5) that Judas, after having brought his money and thrown it down in the temple, went and hanged himself. Luke states (Acts 1, 18) that he "purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and, falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." We have no certain knowledge as to the mode in which we are to combine the two statements, so as to connect the act of suicide with what happened to the body. Interpreters have suggested that Judas may have hung himself on a tree near a precipice over the valley of Hinnom, and that the limb or rope breaking, he fell to the bottom, and was dashed to pieces by the fall. For myself, I felt, as I stood in this valley, and looked up to the rocky terraces which hang over it, that the proposed explanation was a perfectly natural one. I was more than ever satisfied with it. I measured the precipitous, almost perpendicular, walls, in different places, and found the height to be, variously, forty, thirty-six, thirty-three, thirty and twenty-five feet. Olive-trees still grow quite near the edge of these rocks, and, no doubt, in former times they were still more numerous in the same place. A rocky pavement exists, also, at the bottom of the precipices; and hence, on that account, too, a person who should fall from

above would be liable to be crushed and mangled, as well as killed. The traitor may have struck, in his fall, upon some pointed rock, which entered the body and caused "his bowels to gush out." The Aceldama, or field of blood, which was purchased with his money, tradition has placed on the Hill of Evil Council. It may have been in that quarter, at least; for the field belonged originally to a potter (Matthew 27, 7), and argillaceous clay is still found in the neighborhood. A workman, in a pottery which I visited at Jerusalem, said that all their clay was obtained from the hill over the Valley of Hinnom. Supposing Judas to have fallen into the valley, as suggested above, we need not understand Luke as saying, in Acts 1, 19, that "the field of blood" was situated there; but simply that the field which the priests purchased with his money for the burial of strangers, wherever it was, was called Aceldama, because the fact of the traitor's bloody end was so notorious. Matthew (27, 7) mentions another reason for the appellation, which was that the money paid for the field was "the price of blood;" not a different, but concurrent reason, showing that the ill-omened name could be used with a double emphasis.

As we turn our eyes again to Mount Zion, on the other side, we see a field of grain, nearly ripe, in one place, and a team of oxen ploughing in another. It is on a part of the hill which must have been within the limits of the ancient city. The sight presents to us a literal fulfilment of the prophet's words, — "Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps," (Micah 3, 12.)

## THE WEST SIDE.

As we pass around the south-west corner of Zion, the valley which we have followed up suddenly expands, and assumes a more cheerful look. The sacred hill towers far above us on the right, and the plain of Rephaim, so fertile (Isaiah 17, 5), and so often contested in battle (2 Samuel 5, 18), comes into view on the left. Hinnom is the proper name, also, of this part of the valley (Joshua 18, 16), but it is commonly known, for the sake of distinction, as Gihon. Instead of ascending the hill, and following the foot-path under the western wall of the city, let us proceed along the bottom of the valley. In a few minutes we come to the margin of the largest reservoir in the vicinity of Jerusalem, marked on the plans as Birket es-Sultan, or Lower Gihon. It is a ruin at present, incapable of holding any water, and has not been used, probably, for centuries. One day, as I passed there, I saw horses and donkeys at pasture within the limits of the ample basin. It is nearly six hundred feet in length, two hundred and fifty feet in average breadth, and forty in depth. Though the walls are very much decayed, they are sufficiently distinct to show the extent of the work. It must have been, in effect, a permanent reservoir; for such an amount of water as was capable of being collected there could hardly be exhausted before the annual supply was renewed. No one doubts that it was one of the ancient pools which supplied the city with water. It is another proof of the energy with which the Hebrews labored to overcome the natural dis-

advantages to which they were subject. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that a circle of artificial lakes encompassed the Jerusalem of olden times. We look up from our position here to the city, and observe that we are directly opposite to the south-west corner of the wall. The outside portion of Mount Zion is occupied chiefly as a burial-place. The road to Bethlehem, which comes down from the Jaffa gate, crosses the valley just below the reservoir. Near here, also, is a broken arch, which supported the aqueduct by which water was brought to Jerusalem from the Pools of Solomon, near Bethlehem.

#### UPPER GIHON.

The valley, as we advance, recedes considerably from the line of the city walls towards the west. The bank on the right is somewhat steep, but much more sloping on the left. At the distance of several hundred yards we come to another pool, Birket el-Mamilla, generally supposed to be the Upper Gihon of Scripture, (Isaiah 36, 2.) This reservoir is still used, and on the ninth of April contained three or more feet of water. It is about three hundred feet long, two hundred wide, and twenty feet deep. It has steps at two of the corners, which enable the people not only to descend and fetch up water, but to lead down animals to drink. It is customary, also, to bathe here. A large cemetery, where the Mohammedans bury their dead, extends from this point quite to the city walls. It is a place of great resort for promenaders, as well as those who visit as mourners the tombs of their friends.

## THE NORTH SIDE.

Turning now our steps towards the east, and crossing the Jaffa road, we soon strike the north-west corner of the walls, and find ourselves on the north side of Jerusalem. The single objects here which claim attention are fewer than heretofore. The ground, for some distance, is comparatively open and level, thickly studded with olives and other trees. Groups of women and children may be seen, at almost all hours of the day, sitting under these trees, enjoying the pleasant shade. A swing attached to the branches affords a favorite amusement. On the outer edge of this level tract, marked as Scopus on the maps, Titus pitched his camp, on his arrival to besiege Jerusalem. The ruins of houses abound here on every side; a proof that we are walking over the site of the ancient city. Some of the cisterns are quite perfect. One of them which I measured, not larger than many others, was thirty-two feet long, twenty wide, and not less than twenty-five deep. Moving towards the east, we soon pass the Damascus gate, and, at the distance of two hundred rods, have, on our left, the remarkable tombs of the kings, so called. These sepulchres consist of several connected chambers, excavated with great labor out of the solid rock, and ornamented externally with sculptured flowers, clusters of grapes, and other devices. It is the duty of the traveler to turn aside here, procure a torch, and explore these receptacles of the dead. Shortly beyond here, we observe an opening in the side of a rocky ledge, just at

hand on our left, which is called the cave of Jeremiah. It is an excavation, probably not very ancient, out of which building material was obtained for the walls of Jerusalem, and other uses. The city wall on the right here consists of a mass of natural rock, seventy-five feet high, with strata so exactly corresponding with those of the opposite ledge that the passage between them must be artificial. About midway in the line of the northern wall, on the eastern side of a buttress, we pass Herod's gate, as it is called, now walled up. A few steps further on, we find a pool, fifty feet long and ten wide, supplied with water from a contiguous cistern. A narrow depression in the ground, parallel to the wall, reaches from this point to the north-east corner, supposed to have been a trench, or fosse. The land on the north side begins to descend towards the east, as we approach the limit of our walk in that direction.

#### THE CIRCUIT FINISHED.

We turn now towards the south, and pursue a path under the walls in that direction. A cut like a trench appears also here. We have now the valley of Jehoshaphat on our left, and the northern part of the Mount of Olives across the valley. The road over this summit leads to the ancient Anathoth and Bethel. The bank here is not very high, though it falls off abruptly. As we go on we pass through another Mohammedan grave-yard, which occupies the narrow space between the walls and the edge of the valley. It will be seen, from the frequent mention made of sepulchres, ancient

or modern, that they surround the city, at a greater or less distance, on every side. At the distance of about one third of the way between the north and the south extremities of the eastern wall we reach again St. Stephen's gate, where we began our circuit.

#### VIEW FROM THE TOP OF OLIVET.

On the afternoon of April fourteenth, taking a spy-glass with me, I went out of the city, and ascended to the top of the Mount of Olives. The view of Jerusalem and the surrounding country from that height is one of great interest. Crossing the upper bridge over the Kedron, I followed the middle path which leads over the hill, a little to the left of the garden of Gethsemane. When about half way up the ascent I found myself, apparently, off against the level of Jerusalem. The mount is reckoned as two thousand five hundred feet above the Mediterranean, and two hundred feet above the highest part of the city. Hence, Mark (13, 3) is perfectly exact when he represents the Saviour as being "over against the temple, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives" and foretold the doom of the devoted city. How doubly impressive do his words become, when we recollect that the disciples, as they listened to them, had those massive "buildings of the temple" in full view before them, across the valley, of which they had just spoken to him with so much pride, and of which they were told that soon not "one stone would be left on another." One of the most touching scenes connected with this mount is that of David's escape from

Absalom. The aged king, dethroned by a favorite son, followed only by a few trusty friends, "went up the ascent of Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot, and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up," (2 Samuel 15, 30.)

A decayed mosque stands on the summit, from the balcony of which we obtain our best view of the prospect. Taking our stand here, and looking towards the north-east, we observe a blue\* line in the distance, stretching from north to south, which marks the course of the Jordan. The verdure on the banks of the river gives to it that appearance. More directly before us, as we face the east, lies the Dead Sea, in its deep basin, glimpses of which are seen between the heads of the intervening hills. The mountains of Moab appear as a confused mass on the edge of the horizon. The Saviour's temptation took place, in all probability, in the wild region between us and the valley of the Jordan. On the eastern slope of the mount just below us is the little village of Azariyeh,† which has usurped the name of Bethany. Near there our Lord took his departure from earth to heaven, (Luke 24, 50.) The line of hills, commencing at Tekoa (Amos 1, 1), and extending westward, limits our view on the

\* I retain the epithet which I wrote at the time. Dr. Schultz, in his admirable sketch of the same view, represents the appearance as "a green strip on a white ground," (Jerusalem, Eine Vorlesung, p. 43.) The difference may be owing to the variations of the atmosphere.

† The Arabic for Lazarus.

south. Nearer to us, within this line, appears a solitary, cone-shaped hill, called the Frank Mountain. The Crusaders are said to have maintained a fortress here for nearly half a century after they had been driven from Jerusalem. The body of Herod the Great, who died at Jericho, is supposed to have been entombed here. We are to recognize this mount as the Beth-Haccерem, of which Jeremiah (6, 1) says, "Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up the sign of fire in Beth-Haccерem." It is a signal-fire that is meant, and such a fire blazing there at night would be a striking object, seen far and wide. Jerome, who lived at Bethlehem, says that he had Beth-Haccерem constantly in view from that place. It was from the roof of the convent at Bethlehem that the Frank Mountain, so peculiar in its conformation, first caught my eye. About three miles south of Jerusalem we observe a high ridge, with a conspicuous building on it, which is a cloister, named Mar Elyas, in honor of the prophet Elijah. We see in that direction the environs of Bethlehem, but not the village itself. The level tract, which lies north of this point towards Jerusalem, is the plain of Rephaim, where David so often defeated the Philistines (2 Samuel 5, 18. 22), and which Isaiah (16, 6) mentions as noted for its rich harvests. I crossed the plain repeatedly, and can testify that it bears still the same character in regard to fertility. Indeed, if I were to name the most pleasing of the more distant views, in point of verdure and cultivation, which the observer sees from Jerusalem, it would be that spread out before him as he stands at the south-

west corner of the city walls, and looks in the direction of Bethlehem, across the plain of Rephaim.

## NEBY SAMUIL, OR MIZPEH.

In the north-west, about six miles off, we observe a shaft-like hill, which shoots up by itself to the height of some five hundred feet. It is the Mizpeh of Scripture, which means a watch-tower, just the name which such a place should have. The national assemblies of the Jews were often held here. The election of Saul as king took place at Mizpeh.\* A small village and a mosque appear on the summit. It is called now Neby Samuil, from a loose tradition that the prophet Samuel was buried there. One of the most delightful of my excursions from Jerusalem was that which I made to this place. No one can see the ruins there, especially the dilapidated reservoir, and have any doubt that he is standing on Hebrew ground. Olivet, the Mosque of Omar, and other parts of Jerusalem, are visible there, bearing south-east. A finer landscape, not extensive, but fresh, verdant, diversified with trees, meadows and cultivated fields, is rarely seen than the one which shows itself on the north-west. The Beth-Horons, up to which, and thence down again, Joshua chased the Amorites, while "the Lord cast down upon them great hail-stones from heaven," (Joshua 10, 10, sq.), are not far off in the same direction. More exactly north, and in plain

\* For evidence of the historical interest of the place see Joshua 18, 26 ; Judges 20, 1 ; 21, 1 ; 1 Samuel 7, 5 ; 10, 17 ; 2 Kings 25 ; 22, sq., etc.

sight, stands El-Jib, upon a hill of limestone, terraced off by nature with such regularity that the successive steps might be mistaken for a work of art. This El-Jib is the Gibeon which we associate with Ajalon, still found in the modern Yalo, in reference to which Joshua uttered the command, "Sun, stand thou still on Gibeon ; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." The tabernacle was kept here for a time during the reigns of David and Solomon. It was here that the latter monarch had the dream, in which he asked only that God would endue him with wisdom, and was assured that for such moderation in his desires, he should be rewarded not only with that gift, but with riches, honors and long life, (1 Kings 3, 4, sq.) When the atmosphere is clear the Mediterranean can be seen from this height with great distinctness. Thus it appears that the Dead Sea and the Western Sea are both visible from places quite near to Jerusalem. Looking to the north, either from Mizpeh or Olivet, the hills of Samaria, among which are Gerizim and Ebal, form the background of the view in that direction.

#### THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

We take our stand again on Olivet. The view of Jerusalem is too distinct here to be imposing ; for a place which contains so few edifices that will bear inspection, must be seen at a distance, and in the mass, in order to produce the best effect. The out-standing dome on the roofs of so many of the houses has, at least, the interest of novelty. This peculiarity, as far as I recollect, belongs to a few towns in the south of Palestine. The want of verdure is a noticeable

defect in the appearance of the city. A few cypresses and dwarfish palms are almost the only trees to be seen. The minarets, which display often a graceful figure, are not distinguished here for beauty, and are not more than eight or ten in number. The buildings which compose the Church of the Sepulchre attract attention from their comparative size and elegance.

The most conspicuous object is the Mosque of Omar; which, from its situation in the eastern part of the city, can be surveyed here with great advantage. It stands near the centre of an enclosure which coincides very nearly with the court of the ancient temple. It is built on a platform,\* four hundred and fifty feet from east to west, and five hundred and fifty from north to south, elevated about fifteen feet, and paved in part with marble. It is approached on the west side by three flights of stairs, on the north by two, on the south by two, and on the east by one. The building itself is an octagon of sixty-seven feet on a side, the walls of which are ornamented externally with variegated marbles, arranged in elegant and intricate patterns. The lower story of this structure is forty-six feet high. From the roof of this story, at the distance of about one half of its diameter from the outer edge, rises a wall seventy feet higher, perforated, towards the top, with a series of low windows. Above this wall rises a dome of great beauty, forty feet high, surmounted by a gilt crescent. The entire altitude,

\* I adopt the details of this brief description from Mr. Williams' Holy City, Vol. II., p. 301, sq.

therefore, including the platform, is an hundred and seventy feet. The dome is covered with lead, and the roof of the first story with tiles of glazed porcelain. The Mosque has four doors, which face the cardinal points, guarded by handsome porches. It derives its name from Omar, one of the Saracen conquerors of Jerusalem, and was built in the seventh century. The Mahommedans regard it as their holiest sanctuary after that of Mecca. For any one of a different faith to venture there would be treated as an outrage for which nothing but his life could atone. The Sultan, they say at Jerusalem, can permit a Christian to go into the Mosque, but not to come out again. It happened to me, in one instance, to make a mistake, and to be on the point of entering one of the forbidden avenues. A company of Turks, seated there perhaps to act as guardians, started up, and, with loud outcry and violent gesticulation, warned me to turn back, and not incur the consequences of the inadvertent profanation. A few foreigners only have ever gained admission to the interior; among them the late Mr. Catherwood was the most successful in making observations which have extended our knowledge of the premises. In his case the Turkish governor connived at the intrusion; and, at a critical moment, when the mob were about to tear the stranger in pieces, saved him by giving out that he was an architect employed to examine and repair the Mosque.\* The ample court which surrounds the edifice, as seen through the

\* Mr. Catherwood has given a thrilling account of this adventure in a letter inserted in Bartlett's Walks about Jerusalem (p. 14, sq.).

telescope, appeared as a grass-plot shaded with a few trees, and intersected with walks. I could distinguish groups of men seated here and there on the ground, and children pursuing their pastimes.

#### THE MODERN JERUSALEM.

We now enter the city for the purpose of naming rather than describing the objects or places of Scripture interest which the devastations of time have spared. The present Jerusalem, viewed apart from its history, presents very little claim to our notice. The population, including the Jews and Europeans, is supposed not to exceed seventeen thousand.\* The houses are built either of lime or of stone; the former are mere hovels; the latter are more substantial, but generally not large, and without any pretension to elegance. The low windows, guarded with iron grates, give to many of them a dreary, prison-like appearance. The streets are narrow and crooked; some of them are darkened, by means of mats or stone arches thrown over them for the purpose of excluding the heat. The bazaars, in comparison with those of Cairo or Damascus, are few and poorly furnished. A few gardens only occur within the city; though the ground is very far from being all occupied. In the Jews' quarter is a large tract, partly overrun with the Indian fig or prickly-pear, and partly covered with ruins and rubbish of every sort. Bezetha, a hill at the north end, between the Damascus gate and St. Stephen's gate, offers

\* Schultz, in his *Jerusalem, Eine Vorlesung*, p. 33.

many vacant "lots," which might be cultivated or used for the erection of buildings. In one place, just within the gate of St. Stephen, on the right hand, I noticed two or three Arab tents spread out and occupied after the manner of the desert. What a contrast does this state of Jerusalem offer to the ancient city! The Psalmist (122, 3. 4) represents a company of pilgrims, on entering the gates, as lifting up their eyes to the scene around them, and exclaiming with admiration :

" O, Jerusalem ! thou that art builded  
As a city compacted together,  
Whither the tribes go up,  
The tribes of Jehovah, as prescribed to Israel."

The meaning is that Jerusalem was built up in all its parts ; and, unlike what it now is, had no unoccupied room, no waste places. House adjoined house ; edifices filled the ample circuit ; Jerusalem, the Psalmist would say, answered then to the ideal of a city.

#### SITE OF THE TEMPLE.

This is a part of the city concerning which no doubt can be entertained. The present area of the great Mosque corresponds very nearly with the ground which the temple and its appurtenances occupied. It embraces a space almost equal to one third of the city. It has the form of a parallelogram ; the longer sides of which run from north to south. It is surrounded by a high wall, which is the same as that of the city on the east, and in part on the south ; but is a separate one on the north and west sides. It is the summit

of the ancient Moriah, which was cut down in one part and built up in another so as to furnish a proper level for the erection of the temple. This, probably, was the mount on which Abraham was called to sacrifice his son, as a test of his obedience to the divine will. It was used as a threshing-floor in the time of David (1 Chronicles 21, 15, sq.), and was added to the city by Solomon. It may be hoped that the time is near when the bigotry of the Mahommedans will be so far relaxed as to allow Christians to enter and explore this hitherto unopened field. Important discoveries await those who shall be the first to enjoy this opportunity.

#### CASTLE OF ANTONIA.

The site of the temple being known, we are able to determine that of the castle, from the stairs of which Paul addressed the Jewish mob on the occasion mentioned in Acts 21, 34, sq. Josephus speaks of this castle, which was called Antonia, and says that it stood near the north-west corner of the temple-area, and was so high that some of the turrets overlooked the court, and commanded a view of all that was done there. Hence, when the Jews, having dragged the apostle out of the temple, were seeking to kill him, Lysias the chiliarch, who occupied the castle, hastened down and rescued him from the death which would otherwise have been his fate. The situation of the castle must have been identical in part with that of the house used now as a garrison of the Turkish troops at Jerusalem. It stands near the north-west angle of the court of the Mosque, and abuts

on the wall on that side. Travelers are allowed to ascend the roof of this house, where they enjoy their nearest view of the site of the temple. I felt with confidence, as I stood there, that my eyes rested on the sacred ground where prophets and holy men assembled for so many generations to worship God ; and especially where our Lord, whose presence conferred on the temple its greatest glory, performed so many miracles, and discoursed to those who thronged the sanctuary.

#### POOL OF BETHESDA.

Just to the east of the Turkish garrison, and under the northern wall of the Mosque, is a deep excavation, supposed by many to be the ancient pool of Bethesda, into which the sick descended "after the troubling of the water," and were healed, (John 5, 1, sq.) It is three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty feet wide, and seventy-five deep. The Evangelist says that this pool was near the sheep-gate, as the Greek probably signifies, rather than sheep-market, as rendered in the English version. That gate, according to Nehemiah 3, 1, sq., was on the north side of the temple ; and hence the situation of this reservoir would agree with that of Bethesda. The present name, Birket Israil, Pool of Israel, indicates the opinion of the native inhabitants in regard to the object of the excavation. It is no longer used as a reservoir ; though I noticed that the ground was wet along the bottom at the west end, and that drops of water were trickling through the stones of the wall. It is lined with cement, and constructed in other respects in such a way as seemed to me

to resemble entirely the ancient pools or tanks, of which the traveler finds so many in all parts of the country. Yet some reject this view, and contend that it was part of a trench or fosse which protected the temple on the north.

#### POOL OF HEZEKIAH.

Another relic of Hebrew times is a pool in the north-west part of the city, ascribed, with good reason, to king Hezekiah. It measures two hundred and forty feet in length, and one hundred and fifty feet in breadth, with indications that its original dimensions were greater still. The style of the work shows that it is ancient. It is in use at the present time, and receives its supply of water from Birket el-Mamilla, or the Upper Gihon. The aqueduct which connects the two pools can still be traced. We are informed that Hezekiah "made a pool and a conduit, and brought water into the city," (2 Kings 20, 20;) and, also, "stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David," (2 Chronicles 32, 31.) This language shows that Hezekiah constructed a pool in that part of Jerusalem where the present reservoir is found. The antiquity of the work, its situation, and the sources from which it is supplied, authorize the conclusion that this is the pool of which we read in the passages above cited. The Arabic name is Birket el-Humman, Pool of the Bath; because the water is used in part for supplying a bath in the vicinity.

## PILATE'S PRÆTORIUM.

It would be interesting to know, if we could, where Pilate resided during his abode at Jerusalem; because that point would fix the scene of so many of the affecting events which preceded the Saviour's crucifixion. It is impossible to decide the question with absolute certainty. It was customary for the Roman governors to occupy the residences of the native rulers whom they displaced or succeeded; and according to that practice Pilate would be likely, during his visits at Jerusalem, to take up his abode in the former palace of Herod the Great. We know the situation of this palace from information which Josephus has given. The tower of David, so called, just south of the Jaffa gate, one of the most imposing structures at Jerusalem, occupies the site of Herod's tower of Hippicus, which was connected at the same time with his palace. The upper part of the tower is evidently modern; but the lower part exhibits a different style of workmanship, and is undoubtedly a remnant of the Hippic tower, which, as Josephus states, was spared when Titus destroyed the city. The prætorium of Pilate, therefore,\* was, probably, on the northern side of Mount Zion, and off against the temple-mount on the east. In the court of that palace, or in the street before it, we may think of the Saviour as having been arraigned at the bar of Pilate, as mocked, and scourged, and as having set forth

\* See Mark 15, 16. The word for prætorium is rendered "judgment hall" in other passages; as, John 18, 28; 19, 9, etc.

thence, "bearing his cross," to undergo his last sufferings on Calvary. The opinion of some is that Pilate, at the time of the Saviour's trial, occupied the castle of Antonia. The commander of the Roman troops at Jerusalem had his quarters there, as we learn from Acts 21, 31, sq.; but the governor of the province would be expected to occupy a different and more honorable place, in conformity with his higher rank.

#### TOMB OF DAVID.

On the brow of Mount Zion where it extends beyond the present walls is a small mosque, known as Neby David, or David's Tomb. It cannot well be doubted that this memorial marks the place, or the vicinity of the place, where the Hebrew kings were buried. That they were interred on Mount Zion is known with certainty; for it is said of the successive kings of Judah that they "slept with their fathers, and were buried in the city of David," which is only another expression for Mount Zion. See 1 Samuel 11, 43; 14, 31; 15, 3, and other passages. The notice in Nehemiah 3, 16, represents the sepulchre of David as opposite to a certain pool; and the present tomb stands exactly off against the Lower Gihon, on the west of Jerusalem. The apostle Peter (Acts 2, 29) speaks of the place of David's burial as a matter of general notoriety; "his sepulchre," he says, "is with us unto this day." No reason can be assigned why the locality in that age should have become a different one from that which Nehemiah mentions. Josephus furnishes testimony to the

same effect. From that time to the present, as often as we hear any Jewish witnesses on the subject, we find them connecting the national tradition respecting David's tomb with this spot. The Mohammedans and Eastern Christians regard it with the same veneration; though the latter view it with more interest because they claim that a chamber in one of the adjacent buildings is the upper room where the Saviour kept the last passover, and where he appeared to the apostles after his resurrection.\*

\*I may be allowed to devote one other paragraph to the memory of a departed friend. On Mount Zion, not far from David's tomb, is a small cemetery, which, after much difficulty, the Turkish authorities granted some years ago to the American missionaries, formerly at Jerusalem. It includes a few rods only, is surrounded by a stone wall six or eight feet high, and secured by lock and key. Here, near the graves of two or three beloved servants of Christ, who died in laboring to revive the primitive spirit of the Gospel in the East, lie the remains of the Rev. NATHAN W. FISKE, late Professor in Amherst College. He went to Palestine in the year 1847, partly to gratify his desire to see that land of wonderful interest, and partly in the hope that the journey might benefit his health and enable him to resume his favorite labors with fresh zeal and strength. It proved that he was journeying to the "heavenly Jerusalem," as well as the earthly; that he was to reach his home in that distant land. He died on the 27th of May, aged forty-nine, in the calm assurance that he was exchanging earth for heaven. A foot-path, paved with stones, commencing at the gate, divides the cemetery into two parts; and, on the right hand, about half way up this walk, off against a spreading olive-tree, occurs the grave of Professor Fiske; a man justly esteemed for his eminent talents as well as his virtues, whose memory is warmly cherished by a wide circle of

## ANCIENT STONES.

Among the relics of antiquity, I should not omit to speak of the stones of immense size which occur in the foundations of the walls. They are found especially at the south-east corner of the city, and at the bottom of the western wall of the Mosque. Some of the largest of them measure thirty feet in length, and six feet in thickness; while many of them are from seventeen to twenty feet long, and three or four feet thick. Their bevelled edges, their position and size, prove that they belonged to the ancient city. No one can see them and have any doubt of this fact; and it is not improbable that Solomon's workmen placed some of them in the situation which they occupy at present. This state-

friends and pupils. I had good reason to know, from having stood in various relations to him, how deserving he was of such reputation and regard. My visit to his grave called up many affecting recollections of the past. He acquiesced cheerfully in the will of God; but it was impossible not to reflect how many natural feelings it would have gratified could he have been spared to regain once more his native land, and die among the kindred and friends whom it is ever a source of so much consolation to have near us in the last trying scene! *Paucioribus lacrimis compositus es, et novissima in luce desideravere aliquid oculi tui.* A Latin epitaph, setting forth his character in just terms, has been inscribed on his tomb-stone. It afforded me a melancholy pleasure to adopt means for having two cypresses, partly grown, transplanted at the proper season, and placed one at the head and the other at the foot of the grave on Mount Zion, where his body awaits the resurrection of the just.

ment does not affect the truth of the Saviour's declaration, that "not one stone should be left on another;" for, in the first place, such language might be used to convey only the idea of a general destruction, a signal overthrow; and in the second place, it was spoken in fact not of the city and its walls, but of the "buildings of the temple;" and in that application the language was fulfilled in the strictest manner.

#### BRIDGE OVER THE TYROPÆON.

A new object of interest has been brought to light within a few years, by the discovery of the supposed remains of an ancient bridge over the Tyropæon, the hollow between Mount Zion and Mount Moriah. In the western wall of the Mosque of Omar three or four courses of stone, built into the wall, jut out a little from it, as if forming the spring of an arch; and, as Josephus speaks of a bridge which led from the temple on Moriah to the Xystus on Mount Zion, it occurred to Dr. Robinson, on observing the projection of these stones, that the bridge in question may have spanned the Tyropæon at this point. The upper tier of stones connected with this apparent arch, extends fifty feet along the face of the wall, and the largest of the single stones vary in length from twenty to twenty-five feet. The valley has evidently been filled up to some extent, and no doubt other stones of a similar formation exist in the part of the wall sunk beneath the present level of the ground. Though the suggestion as to the identity of these stones with the bridge which Josephus mentions, has been denied or questioned by some, I may be

allowed to say that repeated inspection of the place convinced me that it is well founded; no other theory accounts in a satisfactory way at all for the singular appearance which the wall presents. The bridge, since it existed in the time of Pompey, about 63 B. C., could not have been one of the works which Herod the Great added to the temple, so much adorned and enlarged by his labors. "The magnitude of the stones and the workmanship, as compared with other remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. The former temple was destroyed by fire, which would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There seems, therefore, little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon, or rather his successors, who, according to Josephus, 'built up here immense walls immovable for all time.' Ages upon ages have since rolled away; yet these foundations still endure, and are immovable as at the beginning."\* What distant points of time does this fragment of an arch bind together! How deeply interesting to look upon a ruin which represents so remote a past!

#### THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

Not to disappoint a possible expectation of the reader, in this account of the objects of sacred interest at Jerusalem, it becomes me to say a few words respecting the Holy Sepulchre, so called. A church, it is well known, stands over the

\* Biblical Researches, vol. I., p. 427.

reputed tomb in which the body of the Saviour was placed, and from which he rose again to life. The present church was built in 1808, in the place of a more ancient one destroyed by fire. Some monument of this kind has marked the spot ever since the time of Helena, about 326 A. D., and perhaps earlier still. The question, whether it is the genuine site or not, has been as strongly affirmed by some as it has been denied by others, and must be confessed to be not free from difficulty. Even Protestant writers, of the first rank as antiquaries and scholars, array themselves on opposite sides of the question. It is urged against the genuineness of the sepulchre that it occurs within the limits of the present city; whereas the Evangelists say expressly that the Saviour was crucified out of the city, and was buried near the place where he was crucified (John 19, 41). It is replied to this that the first and second walls of the ancient city\* followed a different course from the present walls, and hence that the alleged Calvary in the north-west section of Jerusalem could have been beyond the gates. It might be thought possible to find traces of the old walls, showing how they ran, and thus clearing up the point in dispute; but it so happens that both parties find, or imagine that they find, such traces, and so bring forward from this source ocular proof in confirmation of their respective theories. Nor is the appeal to Josephus allowed to be at all more decisive; for, though he speaks at some length of the situation and direction of the walls, he

\* See on page 249. The third wall does not come into question here, because it was not built until after the time of Christ.

employs terms not wholly devoid of ambiguity, and is quoted, therefore, according to the construction put upon his language, as good authority on both sides.

A spirit of candor should concede, as it seems to me, that the argument from tradition may be urged with very great effect. It appears improbable, when viewed in the abstract, that the knowledge of so interesting a place as that of the Saviour's burial should ever have been lost; and further, the actual testimony which supports the claim of the Holy Sepulchre mounts back to an early age, and comes from manifold sources. It will be borne in mind that the dispute on this subject relates to the place where the Church of the Sepulchre stands, and not to the tomb shown to travelers at the present time; for this tomb is above ground, on the floor of the church, is constructed of marble, and altogether modern in its style. It can be claimed only that the tomb now seen has been built over the original one, which is either still in existence, but concealed from view (as some contend), or else was destroyed long ago by the enemies of Christianity.

A fact which is apt to impress strongly the minds of observers on the spot, is the apparent impossibility that the present site of the Holy Sepulchre could have been beyond the walls of the city in the time of the Saviour. It is difficult to see how Jerusalem could have been so large as all the transmitted information would lead us to infer, unless it included the north-west portion of the modern city; for that is almost the only quarter left in which the walls, as they

now stand, could be extended, without encountering natural obstructions which it would be difficult to surmount. I make no pretension to having examined this question on historical or topographical grounds; but I must say that the fact just stated struck me as so irreconcilable with the supposition that the so-called sepulchre can be the true one, that I am compelled to share the scepticism of those who reject that belief. The situation of Golgotha or Calvary, where the cross was reared, must be equally uncertain. It was probably a slight eminence, as the name (skull, headland) would seem to indicate, and as we know, from the New Testament, was not far from the garden which contained the tomb.

This conclusion may not be the one which the feelings of many persons would lead them to desire; but no doubt it has been wisely ordered, on the whole, that we are left in such ignorance respecting the identical spots where the Saviour was crucified and buried. There are two sufficient reasons, it has been well remarked,\* why this obscurity should rest on such places. "If they were known, there might be no end to the superstitious reverence which would be felt for them, no limit to the pilgrimages which *Protestant* Christendom would make thither. An interest would have been imparted to holy places, which belongs to holy things; a local Saviour would have been sought; Judea would have remained the glory of all lands, in a sense inconsistent with that religion which was to be universal, and a kind of sanction would have been given to an abuse, which is now flagrant and most melancholy."

\* Professor Edwards in his Writings and Memoir, vol. i., p. 390.

Another reason is, that in reading the gospels, "moral painting, spiritual ideas absorb our attention. The local, the typical, the visible, have passed away. It is with thoughts, feelings, invisible realities, that we are concerned. It is the character of our Redeemer that we must try to unlock. It is the spiritual significance of his actions which should engage our closest attention. It is the miracle itself, not the place where it was performed; it is the suffering itself and the meek patience with which it was endured, not the instruments with which it was inflicted, that should affect our deepest sensibilities."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SKETCHES OF PARTICULAR PLACES.

THE proposed limits of the present work allow me to insert only a few additional statements relating chiefly to places which are mentioned in the New Testament, and important, therefore, as illustrating the personal history of the Redeemer. The notices are miscellaneous in their character, though it happens that most of them are derived from memoranda of my journey in Galilee, the principal theatre of the events which make up the narrative of the Evangelists. It may be expedient, conducive, perhaps, to the interest of the account, if I speak of the places which it is proposed to mention, in connection with some of the circumstances which attended my visit to them.

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#### BETHLEHEM.

Next to Jerusalem certainly no two places have a stronger hold on the imagination and feelings of most readers of the Bible, than Bethlehem and Nazareth; the former, as associated with the great mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God; the latter, as the home in which he dwelt during the

greater part of his earthly existence. I visited Bethlehem on two occasions ; once on my return from an excursion to



BETHLEHEM.

the Jordan and the Dead Sea,\* and again on my return from a tour to the south of Judea, extended to Hebron, Tekoa

\* For the want of a better place, I may mention here a fact of sufficient geographical interest to deserve to be recorded. On arriving at the Dead Sea, we all, of course, made trial of the buoyancy of the waters ; and two of the company, more adventurous than the rest, continued to bathe in them for three quarters of an hour ; one of them complaining afterwards of some unpleasant sensations that hung about him for a time, but otherwise experiencing no injury. A rocky islet

and the Frank mountain. My first view of the place was from the east, on coming out of the desert which borders on the valley of the Jordan. It appeared here as a walled town on the summit of a rugged hill, overlooking a valley which descends steeply toward the north and the east, the other sides of the hill not being seen distinctly from this direction. The general aspect of the region was richer, more attractive, than I had supposed. The slope on the north-east presented a thick array of fig-trees and olives, especially the former. On the outer edge of the valley we passed a tract of some extent, unenclosed, after the fashion of the country, a part of which had recently been ploughed up for a new crop, and a part was planted with wheat and barley, the latter requiring but a short time (it was the first week in April) to

lay off the shore, distant some sixty or eighty rods. The individuals referred to, deceived as to the distance, undertook to swim to the island, and, by exerting their utmost strength, accomplished the feat. On returning they struck for the shore at a different point; and, fortunately for them in their exhausted state, found the water so shallow as to be able to wade almost the whole way. Some writers have denied or doubted the existence of an island at the north end of the Dead Sea; while others speak of having seen a small peninsula stretching out from this point of the coast. The explanation of the two statements undoubtedly is, that the isthmus of this peninsula is occasionally submerged, so that the extremity of it appears as an island. This was the case, as I have every reason to believe, at the time when I was there (April 7th); and the shallow soundings which enabled my friends to wade ashore, marked the line of the isthmus, then under water.

come to maturity. This was the season, therefore, "the beginning of the barley harvest," when Naomi with her daughter-in-law arrived at Bethlehem from the land of Moab; and here were the fields, still cultivated in the same manner, in which Ruth gleaned after the reapers of Boaz. Another pleasing incident was, that we met on the way shepherds leading out their flocks to the neighboring hills; reminding us of David, who spent his youth here in the same employment, and perhaps indited here the Psalm (23), "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;" and especially leading us to think of those "who kept watch here over their flocks by night," and heard from the angels the announcement that the long-expected Deliverer was born into the world.

Further on, nearer to the town, a different mode of cultivation appeared; the fields gave place to orchards and gardens, surrounded by walls and furnished with watch-towers, so much the more necessary just here, because the people are so exposed to the predatory incursions of the Arabs from the adjacent desert. Two weeks after this, I approached Bethlehem from the south. The hill on this side is boldly abrupt, seeming to consist of solid rock; the valley, also, is broader, and though not destitute of fruit-trees, is planted chiefly with vines, which were among the most flourishing that I saw in any part of the country. We mounted up the steep ascent by a well traveled path. It was a day of intense heat (April 21st); I was burning with thirst, and nothing could be more delightful or welcome, than the sight of a

little stream coursing down the hill-side ; it came from a reservoir on the height above, which is supplied with water from Solomon's pools. A scene in David's life came vividly before me. "O, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate!" exclaimed the fugitive in the wilderness, as, parched with thirst, under the burning heat of some noonday, he looked towards that same hill, and thought of the cooling fountains of his native village (1 Chronicles 11, 17).

I love to recall to mind another view of Bethlehem, from a different point still ; it is one that occurs on the height near the convent of Mar Elyas, about midway between the ever-memorable places where the Saviour was born and where he died, — the only spot on this road where the traveler embraces them both within his scope of view at the same time ; for the ridge which we cross here causes the one to disappear almost at the very moment that it brings the other into sight. Bethlehem before us in one direction, Jerusalem in the other, as we look now to the south and now to the north, — on what spectacle could we fix our eyes, awaking thoughts of such varied interest, appealing so strongly to our religious sensibilities ! It may have been precisely here, if we may assume that the night was unclouded, that the Magians whom Herod sent to "search for the young child," obtained their first view of Bethlehem ; and it may have been here, therefore, that the star, which they would need to indicate the place of the Messiah's birth, reappeared to them, after its temporary absence ; such, at all events, is the legend ; —

and it may have caught up the truth in this instance, if it has not transmitted it to us. Bethlehem, as looked back upon from this mid-way station, seemed to consist of two villages, since a slight depression separates the east and west ends of the town from each other. The Church of the Nativity and the convents form one cluster of edifices on the left, and the dwellings of the bulk of the inhabitants form another on the right. A few straggling houses, also, are seen at the foot of the hill on the east.

On entering the town, I paid the customary tribute of a visit to the traditional places. The Church of the Nativity is erected over a natural grotto, alleged, in defiance of all probability (though some maintain the contrary), to be the manger of the inn where the Saviour was born. Numerous lamps are suspended from the roof, which, being kept burning day and night, and sparkling with the lustre reflected from so many polished surfaces, surprise and almost dazzle the beholder. I looked in vain for the "silver star," a symbol of the one which "stood over where the young child was," which travelers mention as affixed to the place where Christ is said to have been born; it had been recently torn up in a squabble between the Latin and Greek Christians, who are always contending with each other about points of etiquette and precedence in the use of the holy places. There are other caves at Bethlehem which have been associated with other events. One of them is where it is said that the Virgin was concealed during Herod's persecution and massacre; another, where the slaughtered children were buried; another, where the holy



Jerome lived and translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Latin. Not to neglect any place which has been honored with such pretensions, whether well founded or not, we rode to the Field of the Shepherds, distant about a mile to the east of the town. It may not have been just there, but certainly was on those plains which we passed, that the "glad tidings of great joy, — peace on earth and good will towards men," were first published to our race. But I derived most satisfaction from ascending the roof of the Franciscan convent, which affords an excellent view of the region. The general aspect of the country was that of undulating hills and valleys, not unpleasing, but destitute of much of the charm arising from the presence of trees and verdure. Among the remoter objects of interest, was the Dead Sea to the east; and on the south, Beth-Haccarem or the Frank Mountain, and the hill of Tekoa, where, as I found on a subsequent excursion thither, "herdsmen" still pitch their tents (Tekoa signifies a place of that kind) as in days of old. Jerome, in his commentary on Amos (1, 1), says that he had the prophet's birthplace before his eyes as he wrote. The eye rested, also, on the bleak wilderness of Engedi, and the heights about Hebron.

#### NAZARETH.

I was anxious, on leaving Jerusalem, Wednesday, April 28th, to distribute the intermediate time so as to spend the next Sabbath at Nazareth. Though it is not easy always to regulate the stages of such a journey in conformity with a definite plan, my desire in this instance was gratified. A

leisurely ride of three days and a half through the heart of the ancient land of Israel (though the ground may be trav-



ersed with despatch in a single day), with the opportunity of an occasional detour to such places as Gophna, Shilo and Samaria, brought me, on the afternoon of Saturday, May first, to the secluded valley where the Redeemer lived so long in obscurity, before his entrance on his public work. My first sight of the humble village, as can be readily imagined, formed one of the great moments of the journey. Nazareth is situated just north of the great plain of Esdraelon, among the lovely hills at the southern extremity of the Lebanon

mountains. It is hidden from view till you look down upon it from the adjacent heights. It lies along the western edge of a ravine, which, narrow for the most part, flows in a waving line through the mountains, enlarging itself somewhat in front of the town, and falling into the great plain on the south-east. The present Nazareth belongs to the better class of eastern villages ; it has a population of nearly three thousand, a few of them Mohammedans, but most of them Christians of the Latin and Greek order. The houses are well built of stone ; there is one mosque, a Latin convent of stately dimensions, though displaying no great beauty, a small Maronite church, a Greek church, and perhaps a church or chapel of some of the other confessions.

We took up our quarters in the Latin convent, which opens its doors freely to all travelers who bear the Christian name. During a part of the Sabbath I attended worship in the chapel of a missionary, recently established at Nazareth, under the direction of the London Jews' Society. Some twelve or fifteen persons were present, two or three of them females. They were seceders from the Latin and Greek communities, and as yet Protestants only in name. The service was in Arabic, and consisted entirely of the reading of a portion of the Scriptures, and of prayers. The monks of the convent were said to be very hostile to this mission ; a few weeks before my visit, they had broken open the chapel, seized the missionary, and inflicted on him personal violence. The affair was undergoing investigation, at that time, by the British consul at Beirut. The missionary's

imperfect knowledge of the language was the reason (as I understood) why he gave no direct religious instruction.

#### LATTER RAIN.

It had rained during the previous night, and, about noon, rained again quite freely; the streets of Nazareth were full of mud and mire, so as to be almost impassable. This was the last time (May second) that it rained during my stay in Palestine, and may be considered as marking the usual limit of the "latter rain," though showers may sometimes occur after this, or may have ceased altogether a week or two earlier. That the latter rain has continued longer, or has increased in amount within a few years past, though it has been asserted by some, is a statement that rests, as far as I could ascertain, upon no sufficient foundation. There is no proof of anything beyond an occasional irregularity; the seasons there are liable to fluctuate from year to year, in regard to the lateness and abundance of the rains, as they do in other lands; but no facts have been observed which indicate at all the introduction of a new law in regard to the character of the seasons. Some of those who hold to the literal restoration of the Jews to the promised land, have appealed to such a supposed change as favoring that view: they would infer from it that Providence is about to remove one of the great obstacles to the fertility of Palestine, and thus prepare the way for its becoming the abode of a vastly augmented population. This bearing of the subject is my apology for taking notice of it here.

Behind the Maronite church is a steep precipice, forty or fifty feet high, "on the brow of the hill;" the very one, it may be, over which the people of Nazareth attempted to thrust the Saviour, on the Sabbath when they took such offence at his preaching in the synagogue. See Luke 4, 28, sq. I observed other rocky ledges, on other parts of the hill, so precipitous that a person could not be thrown over them without almost certain destruction. A worthless tradition has transferred this event to a hill about two miles to the south-east of the town. But there is no evidence that Nazareth ever occupied a different site from the present one; and that a mob so exasperated, whose object was to put to death the object of their rage, should have repaired to so distant a place for that purpose, is entirely incredible.

#### ASCENT OF MOUNT TABOR.

Monday, May third, was allotted to an excursion to Mount Tabor. Before starting, however, I ascended the hill in the rear of Nazareth, on which stands a tomb of Neby Ismail, from which the observer beholds one of the grandest panoramic scenes to be found in that country or any other. To give the reader an idea of the interest and grandeur of the spectacle, I need only enumerate some of the objects within sight as one looks abroad from this hill. Among them are the summits of Tabor, Gilboa, Carmel, Hermon, the mountains of Samaria, Gilead, Lebanon, the bay of Akka, glimpses of the Mediterranean, the plain of Esdraelon, and a number of villages, some of them bearing still the names applied to

them in the Bible. One of the towns, which I made out distinctly with a glass, was the modern Acre, the Ptolemais of the New Testament, though it has been said to be hidden by the intervening hills; at the distance of a few rods on the south-west of the Welee, I could distinguish it with the naked eye.

The region of Tabor was not deemed entirely safe, and it was thought best to add to our company an armed horseman. We started from Nazareth at nine o'clock, A. M. Our course lay nearly due east. We passed the Fountain of the Virgin near the Greek church, where the water-carriers were busy as ever at their daily task.\* The ride to the foot of the mount occupied an hour and three quarters, making the distance six or eight miles. Some travelers make the time longer; but we had no baggage, and moved at a quick step. The intervening tract presented a succession of hills and valleys, and, during the latter part of the way, was thickly studded with oaks, diminutive in size, but peculiar in throwing out branches almost from the roots, and having leaves of a very dark green. A narrow ridge connects Tabor with the hills of Nazareth on the west, but on every other side it rises abruptly from the plain of Esdraelon, and its symmetrical form makes it conspicuous at a great distance, and invests it with singular beauty. It took us three quarters of an hour to reach the summit; its estimated height is about a thousand feet. The path was circuitous, and at times steep, but not so much so as to oblige us to dispense with

\* See the description on pages 91 and 92.

the use of our horses. The sides of the mount are for the most part so densely covered with trees and bushes, as to intercept the prospect; but now and then we came out upon a clear spot as we ascended, which revealed a magnificent view of the adjacent plain.

#### HERMITS ON TABOR.

On coming to the top we were surprised at the sudden apparition of four men, who came forward from a recess among the ruins existing there. Oddly enough, two of them had knitting-work in their hands, which they were diligently plying. One of them proved to be a Greek priest, a man of huge stature, and over eighty years old, who had come there, as he said, to spend the remainder of his days. He was a native of Wallachia, and, according to his own account, instead of having applied himself to any stated parochial cure, had spent much of his time in traveling from one country to another. In addition to his journey into the East, he said that he had visited the principal capitals of Europe; naming among them Vienna, Rome, Paris and London. He professed to be expecting the visible advent of Christ from day to day; though, on being questioned as to this point, he admitted that he was by no means confident that it would occur within his life-time. He showed me a copy of the Vulgate, well thumbed; an ability to read Latin being an easy acquisition for a person born in Wallachia, in as much as the spoken language of that province is a corrupt form of the Latin inherited from the ancient Romans. He said that

it was two years (if my memory serves me) since he had betaken himself to this retreat, and that he had not left the mountain during that time. In answer to my inquiry how he subsisted, he said that he lived chiefly on herbs, cultivated a small garden for the purpose of raising them, and relied, for whatever else he might need, on the Arabs, who, as his modesty allowed him to inform us, regarded him as a great saint. He said that the natives at first were disposed to annoy him, stole his fruit, and refused to bring him supplies; but that one of them having been smitten with blindness as a punishment for this behavior, they became alarmed, confessed their sin, and after that treated him kindly. He stated this with entire gravity; and added further, that a lock of his hair, or any other object blessed by him, and carried to the sick, had proved again and again the means of their immediate recovery. I was really puzzled to tell whether he had deceived himself, or expected to impose on us. The other three men were natives of the same province. Two of them, having been to Jerusalem and the Jordan on a pilgrimage, had taken Tabor in their way on their return homeward; where finding unexpectedly the priest, whom they happened to know, they concluded to remain with him for a time. One of them was deliberating whether he should not take up his permanent abode there. The fourth person was a young man, a relative of the priest, who seemed to have taken on himself the filial office of caring for his aged friend in the last extremity.

The top of Tabor presents an uneven platform, making a

circuit of half an hour's walk. Most of this space is filled with a confused heap of ruins, chiefly the remains of fortifications built in the time of the crusaders. A few of the stones are thought to bear marks of a Hebrew origin. The most perfect relic is a Saracenic arch, known as the Tower of the Winds. Some of the ruins belonged evidently to monasteries and churches. The Latin Christians have now an altar here, at which their priests from Nazareth perform an annual mass. The Greeks, also, have a chapel, where, on certain festivals, they assemble for the performance of religious rites. I strolled about the hill, alone and unarmed, peering into every nook and corner, threading my way through the tall grass and tangled thickets, without being aware that I was running any risk in so doing; though I have since read, with some horror, that wolves, wild boars, lynxes, and various reptiles, lurk there, and are liable at any time to show themselves to the intruder, and perhaps endanger his safety.

#### THE TRANSFIGURATION.

In sermons and popular works, Tabor is often represented as the undoubted scene of the Saviour's transfiguration. It may be well to correct here that misapprehension. It is susceptible of proof, from history, that a fortress or town existed on Tabor from very early times down to 50 or 53 B. C.; and, as Josephus says that he strengthened the fortifications of a city there, about 60 A. D., it is morally certain that Tabor must have been inhabited during the intervening period, that

is, in the days of Christ. This, therefore, could not have been the mount of Transfiguration; for when it is said that Jesus took his disciples "up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them" (Matthew 17, 1), we must understand that he brought them to a secluded, solitary place, where they were alone by themselves. It is impossible to say certainly where this wonderful event was transacted; it may have been, judging from some obscure intimations in the New Testament, a little further north, in the vicinity of Mount Hermon.

#### THE PROSPECT FROM TABOR.

It enables one to acquire a useful idea of the extent of the Holy Land, and of the relative situation of different places, to stand, in reality or in imagination, on an eminence like this of Tabor, and there fix in mind the principal geographical points which lie within view, or which he is led to associate with the scene before him. The Sea of Tiberias, reposing in its deep bed, is distinctly seen from Tabor on the east, distant not less than fifteen miles. The moment when I first saw its waters, flashing on the sight through the clear atmosphere, can never be forgotten. In the same direction the eye traces the course of the Jordan for many miles; while, still further east, it rests upon a boundless perspective of hills and valleys, embracing the modern Hauran, the ancient Gilead and Bashan. The dark line which skirts the horizon on the west is the Mediterranean; the rich plains of Galilee fill up the intermediate space as far as the foot of

Tabor. Carmel lifts its head in the north-west. On the north we behold the last ranges of Lebanon, as they rise into the hills about Safet, overtopped in the rear by the snow-capped Hermon, and, still nearer to us, the Horns of Hattin, the reputed mount of the Beatitudes. On the south are seen, first the summits of Gilboa, and then the mountains and valleys of Ephraim, along which the mind glances till it soon reaches Zion and Moriah. In the vicinity of the Jordan I observed a rising cloud of smoke; it enabled me, on the information of the guide, to identify the site of Beisan (itself not visible), the ancient Bethshean, on whose walls the Philistines hung up the head of Saul after the slaughter on Gilboa. Looking across a branch of the plain of Esdraelon to an opposite ridge, I beheld Endor, the abode of the sorceress whom the king consulted on the night before his fatal battle. Another little village clings to the same hill-side, on which I gazed with still deeper interest; it is Nain, beyond question the village of that name in the New Testament, where the Saviour touched the bier, and restored to life the widow's son. Such are some of the natural objects, in themselves so pleasing and grand, and suggestive of so many reflections, which one beholds from this remarkable height. I can say, unaffectedly, that I thank God for having been permitted to stand on such a spot, and survey with my own eyes the scene sketched above in so imperfect a manner.

## A VIEW OF HERMON.

On Tuesday, May fourth, I left Nazareth, at nine o'clock A. M., for the Sea of Tiberias. At the distance of half an hour, we rose to the top of a hill, which gave us our parting view of the early home of the Saviour. The village showed itself here under some new aspects. It could be seen from end to end, as it lay stretched along the side and foot of the hill. A larger sweep of the valley which runs past it was brought into view. The sudden expansion of the valley in front of the town appeared to better advantage than anywhere else. But this height remains fixed in my memory chiefly for another reason: it was there that I enjoyed my grandest view of Jebel esh-Sheikh, the lofty Hermon of the Scriptures. The sight was wholly unexpected. The mountain was concealed one moment, and the next, on ascending a few steps higher, stood arrayed before me with an imposing effect, which I cannot easily describe. I saw this mountain from different points of view, but never when it impressed me as then and there. It rose immensely above every surrounding object. The purity of the atmosphere caused it to appear near, though it was in reality many miles distant. The snow on its head and sides sparkled under the rays of the sun, as if it had been robed in a vesture of silver. In my mind's eye, at that moment, it had none of the appearance of an inert mass of earth and rock, but glowed with life and animation. It stood there, athwart my path as it were, like a mighty giant rearing his head toward heaven, and swelling

with the proud consciousness of strength and majesty. I felt how natural was the Psalmist's personification ; his language springs spontaneously to the lips : "The north and the south, thou hast created them : Tabor and Hermon rejoice in thy name" (Psalm 89, 12).

#### THE FIRST MIRACLE OF CHRIST.

About two hours from Nazareth we descended into a basin among the hills, where is a little village called Kana, supposed generally to be the place where the Saviour performed his first miracle, that of turning the water into wine. Just out of the town, on the west, are two or three watering-places, supplied from a fountain a few paces to the south. The water is brought to the reservoir through a subterranean passage. A number of females were there, some filling their jars, others washing and beating out clothes with their clubs. A little to the left of this spot was a plantation of olives, fig-trees and pomegranates, extending quite to the village ; there were more of these last named trees than I saw together in any other place ; and, being then in blossom, the gorgeous flower gave to them a splendid appearance. A Greek church stands at the entrance of the town, deriving its special sanctity, as I understood, from its being supposed to occupy the site of the house in which the marriage was celebrated, to which Jesus and his friends were invited. A priest soon arrived, in obedience to our call, and unlocked the doors of the church. It is a low stone building, wretchedly neglected and out of repair. The walls are defaced with the

names of visitors, and scribbled over in various languages. There is another Kana, just about as far from Nazareth towards the north (this one is north-east), which some prefer to regard as the Cana of the New Testament. No doubt one of the two was the scene of the interesting ceremony referred to; it would be difficult to decide the question of their respective claims.

#### MOUNT OF THE BEATITUDES.

Pursuing still the road from Nazareth to Tiberias, not far beyond Lubieh, we came to a well, surrounded by a high curb-stone, where a company of Jews were halting to obtain water for themselves and their animals. At this point, the hill known as Kurun Hattin, the Horns of Hattin, was at a short distance off to the left. This is pointed out as the mount on which the Saviour delivered the discourse recorded at such length by Matthew (5, 1, sq.). Though the noontide heat was beating down upon us with scorching power, I could not resist the temptation to turn aside and examine a place for which such a claim has been set up, though I cannot say that I have any great confidence in it. If it was not on this mount, however, it was on some mount in the vicinity, that our Lord uttered the discourse in question; for the sacred narrative implies that he was on the west side of the Lake of Tiberias at that time. The hill referred to is rocky, and rises steeply to a moderate height above the plain. It has two summits, with a slight depression between them, and it is from these projecting points, or horns, that it receives the

name given to it. From the top, the observer has a full view of the Sea of Tiberias. The most pleasing feature of the landscape is that presented in the diversified appearance of the fields. The different plots of ground exhibit various colors, according to the state of cultivation: some of them are red, where the land has been newly ploughed up, the natural appearance of the soil; others yellow or white, where the harvest is beginning to ripen, or is already ripe; and others green, being covered with grass or springing grain. As they are contiguous to each other, or intermixed, these parti-colored plots present at some distance an appearance of gay checkered work, which is really beautiful.

In rhetorical descriptions of the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount, we often hear the people represented as looking up to the speaker from the sides of the hill, or listening to him from the plain. This would not be possible with reference to the present locality; for it is too precipitous and too elevated to allow of such a position. The Saviour could have sat there, however, in the midst of his hearers; for it affords a platform amply large enough for the accommodation of the hundreds who may have been present on that occasion.

#### DESCENT TO TIBERIAS.

We crossed the plain of Hattin so as to regain the road to Tiberias, about two miles west of the commencing descent to the shores of the lake. It seemed, from the brow of the hill there, as if one could almost throw a stone into the water; but the distance proved to be very deceptive. It must have

been at least a mile and a half to the town of Tiberias, to which we now descended. The road was steep and winding, and, in our impatience after so fatiguing a jaunt, seemed to lengthen itself out as if it would never end. Writers differ as to the depression of this sea below the level of the Mediterranean. The estimate of the English engineer, Lieutenant Symonds, makes it three hundred and twenty-eight feet.

#### THE HOT BATHS.

Not stopping now at Tiberias, we passed along the shore, about a mile to the south, and encamped near the hot springs which are found there. The fame of these springs reached the ears even of the Greeks and Romans. Pliny enumerates them among the great natural curiosities of the world. Josephus mentions them under the name of Ammaus, no doubt (as both the similarity and the signification of the terms indicate) the Hammath of the Hebrews. They existed, therefore, as long ago, at least, as the age of Moses and Joshua; for the above name occurs in Joshua 19, 35. The place on our arrival was alive with a crowd of people, Jews and Arabs, who had come hither, some to try the medicinal virtue of the waters, and others for traffic or amusement. For the convenience of bathers, two covered buildings have been erected, into which the water of the springs is conveyed. The larger one of these contains a capacious reservoir, in which I found some fifteen or twenty persons swimming at once. Very few of them, judging from their merry shouts, and the vigor with which they exercised their natatorial

powers, could have been invalids, whose case had become as yet desperate. The room was so full of vapor and heat, merely from the effect of the water in its natural state, that it seemed for the moment as if my breath would be taken from me, and, after a hasty glance at the premises, I was glad to emerge again into the open air. Accommodations exist for taking a bath in a more private manner.

The springs issue from the ground at the foot of the hills, near the shore, and flow into the lake, which they render brackish for a certain distance. I put my thermometer into the water, but it was useless as a means of ascertaining the heat; the quicksilver flew instantly to the top of the tube. I then put my hand into it, but was obliged to withdraw it as quickly; the water proved to be little less than scalding hot. . It is necessary to allow it to stand for some twelve hours before it can be applied to the body. Richardson, a physician, judged that the temperature was as high as one hundred degrees, even after such delay.

It was easy to forego the doubtful pleasure of bathing in such an element; but it was not easy to resist the temptation of resorting to the lake for that purpose. Near the spot to which I retired were two or three clusters of oleander, just then in full blossom, and displaying the perfection of its beauty. This was the first time that I had observed that flower; though after this it was rarely out of sight for a single day during the remainder of the journey.

## A NIGHT-SCENE.

My tent was pitched for the night within a few feet of the water's edge. There I sat for hours, looking forth upon the peaceful lake, and revolving the thoughts which would naturally fill one's mind in such a situation. A gentle ripple was breaking at my feet with a noise hardly perceptible. Soon the full-orbed moon showed itself over the hills of Gilead, and, mounting higher and higher, hung at length over the sea, from which its broad disk was reflected back as from the surface of a mirror. The Saviour often crossed and recrossed this lake. His sacred feet pressed its shores; here he stood, and discoursed to the listening multitudes; here he performed many of his mightiest works. The surrounding hills heard his midnight prayers. His voice quelled the tempest which threw into such commotion these waters, now so peaceful. Most of his disciples had their homes in this neighborhood. Here they pursued their daily avocations till he called them to their great mission. It was at the Sea of Tiberias that he showed himself to them on one occasion after his resurrection from the dead. I need not attempt to describe the feelings which such recollections awaken on the spot which they consecrate. The scene was so exciting, that, though I had been riding hard through the day, and sometimes had been so wearied as to be compelled to dismount and snatch a moment's repose under a tree, or "in the shadow of a great rock," yet all sense of weariness was now gone; the hour of midnight was past before I thought of rest, or felt the need of it.

## APPEARANCE OF THE LAKE.

This lake is about fifteen miles long, and, on the average, half as broad. The eye surveys the whole expanse of it from almost any point on the west side, except a small part towards the south, where a projection of the shore shuts out the view. It abounds still in fish, of the same kind that are found in the Nile. Though in the days of the Saviour so many boats ploughed its waters (John 6, 23), but one single solitary craft has been seen there for many years; and of the populous villages which once existed in that region, all have now disappeared except two or three. A circle of hills surrounds the lake, on the south and east shores, as high as eight hundred or a thousand feet; at the north-east corner only the land rises more gradually, and is comparatively open. The character of the scenery has impressed travelers somewhat differently; and it must be confessed that the historical associations are liable to warp our judgment. For myself, I cannot hesitate to say that the appearance of the lake, reposing so quietly in its deep bed, the frame-work of hills which encase it on almost every side, the steep precipices coming down in some places so boldly to the shore, the cloudless sky above, having its every hue and variation reflected back from the watery mirror beneath, formed in my eye a combination of landscape beauty equal, to say the least, to any other which it has been my privilege to see in any land.

## STORMS ON THE LAKE.

During all the time that I was near the lake, the water was entirely tranquil. At the north end, where the Jordan flows into it, a slight agitation appeared, for a short distance, but otherwise hardly a ripple disturbed the surface. Indeed, in looking down upon the water from a height of two or three hundred feet, it seemed as if we were looking into vacuity itself. A boat floating on the bosom of the lake would have appeared as if hanging in mid-air.

But though the sea was so quiet at that time, it is still subject to sudden gusts of wind, which sweep down through the gorges of the mountains, and in a few moments produce a violent tempest. So it was in the case of the storm which the Saviour allayed with a word. It was calm when he and the disciples embarked to cross from the eastern side to the western; ere they had proceeded far, a wind arose, "the waves beat into the boat," the cry is heard, "Lord, save us, we perish;" and nothing but a miracle, from him who controls the elements, saved them from instant destruction. Referring to this peculiarity of the sea, an Arabian poet says: "When the winds lash it, you would think you saw two armies, one in flight, the other in pursuit."

Few travelers have happened to be present during the occurrence of one of these storms. Mr. Bartlett, author of "Footsteps of our Lord and his Apostles," was one of this fortunate number. "After sunset," he says, "I strolled down to the lake, and, seating myself upon a mass of broken wall, enjoyed the freshness of the evening. All the day

there had not been a breath of air, the sultry heat had been that of a furnace ; but now a cool breeze came off the table-land, and, rushing down the ravines that descend to the lake, began to ruffle its placid bosom. As it grew darker, the breeze increased to a gale, the lake became a sheet of foam, and the white-headed breakers dashed proudly on the rugged beach ; its gentle murmur was now changed into the wild and mournful sound of the whistling wind and the agitated waters. Afar off was dimly seen a little barque struggling with the waves, and then lost sight of amidst the misty rack. To have thus seen so striking an exemplification of the scripture narrative, was as interesting as it was unexpected."

#### PLAIN OF GENNESARET.

We broke up our tents on the shore of the lake, at half past nine, A. M., May fifth, and set forward for Safet. We reached the town of Tiberias in twenty-five minutes. The broken columns and other ruins, scattered along the way, show that the ancient city was much more extensive than its modern successor. Though the Sea of Tiberias is mentioned so often in the New Testament, the town which gave to it that name is mentioned but once, namely, in John 6, 23. In an hour from Tiberias we came to Mejdal, a paltry village near where a line of high rocks overhangs the sea. In Matthew 15, 39, we read that Jesus, "having sent away the multitude, entered into a ship and came to the coasts of Magdala." Here, beyond question, stood that town, which gave name also to the adjacent region. It is remarkable

that the part of the plain nearest to this place (Schubert mentions the fact) is now called Ard el-Mejdel, field or coast of Mejdél. This was the birth-place, also, of Mary Magdalene. Beyond here the path began to descend, and soon brought us to a broad plain, well watered and fertile. It lies between the hills which come down from the west and the north end of the Sea of Galilee on the east. In forty minutes from Mejdél, we crossed a copious stream, hastening with its tribute to that sea. Here and there were trees and bushes so thick as to form a sort of grove. A few acres were planted with grain, but the greater part was given up to a wild, luxuriant vegetation. Few travelers fail to speak of the gigantic oleanders which flourish here in great profusion. This is the "land of Gennesaret" (Matthew 14, 34), whence the lake, also, was called the "Lake of Gennesaret" (Luke 5, 1). A pile of ruins occurs in this vicinity, which some would identify as the site of Capernaum; but the matter is involved still in much uncertainty. Chorazin and Bethsaida, smaller villages, are supposed to have stood between Magdala and Capernaum. The "woe" which our Lord pronounced on these cities, which so abused their privileges, would almost seem to have been so literally executed, that every certain trace of them has been swept away.

#### THE RIVER KISHON.

The event which signalized May eighth was the ascent of Mount Carmel. Having spent the previous night on the northern border of the plain of Akka, we crossed that plain

in a diagonal direction, and came out on the shore of the Mediterranean, just north of the mouth of El-Mukata, the modern name of the Kishon. This river rises near the foot of Tabor, and, after flowing for several miles through the plain of Esdraelon and of Akka, falls into the sea at the northern base of Carmel. It was easily forded at the mouth, being partially filled up with sand from the sea, though, at the distance of a few rods inland, it was so wide and deep as to defy any such attempt. The natives, of whom we had inquired the way, told us that we must strike the river near its mouth, as otherwise we should find it impassable. The water was brackish where we crossed, in consequence of the vicinity of the sea, though not so much so that our thirsty animals were not willing to drink of it. The Kishon is well known, from the allusion made to it in the song of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5, 19, sq.) :

“ The kings came, they fought,  
Then fought the kings of Canaan,  
By Taanach, on the waters of Megiddo.  
They fought from heaven,  
The stars from their courses fought with Sisera.  
The river Kishon swept them away,  
That ancient river, the river Kishon.”

The expression that “the stars of heaven fought” for the Israelites, means probably that the heavens, or elements of nature, fought for them ; that a storm of thunder, rain and hail, accompanied the battle, and contributed to the defeat of the Canaanites. Taanach and Megiddo seem to be men-

tioned in order to point out the places where the routed forces of Sisera attempted to cross the swollen torrent, and were swept away. The stream is small throughout most of its course, after a drought hardly traceable in some places ; but it may be suddenly increased by the rain, and is then amply large enough to occasion a disaster like that which befell the Canaanites. The same thing has occurred there again in recent times. Some of the Turkish troops, whom Napoleon defeated in the battle of Tabor, lost their lives in a similar attempt to cross the treacherous flood.

It was on the banks of this stream, probably not far from its entrance into the sea, where I passed, that Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. The contest between him and those idolaters had taken place on Carmel ; and from thence, it is said, he "brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1 Kings 18, 40). Scenes like that of the worshippers of Baal, calling for hours on the name of their god, leaping on the altar, "cutting themselves with knives till the blood gushed out," are still common among the Mohammedans. The spirit of the old idolatry lives still in the fanatical followers of the prophet. At Cairo, Remleh, and Constantinople, I witnessed exhibitions which bordered closely on such revolting extravagances.

#### MONASTERY OF THE CARMELITES.

Just beyond Haifa, a small Arab town on the south of the bay of Akka, we began to climb the ascent to Carmel. Several vessels and a great many boats were lying at anchor off

against the town. The harbor is much better than that of Akka, being sheltered by Carmel, and more free from reefs. The fish-nets, hung upon the walls to dry, showed from what source the people gained in part their livelihood. The path leading up the mountain is rocky and steep, but so well worn that we could ride the whole way. This path, indented in the white limestone, had been distinctly visible, like a strip of snow, from the Welce, behind Nazareth. It took us twenty minutes to arrive at the summit. The height is said to be ten or twelve hundred feet. The Carmelite monks, at present fifteen in number, have a monastery here, unquestionably the finest edifice of its kind in all the East. They affect the ascetic rigor of their prototype, Elijah the Tishbite. They wear no shoes but sandals; they abstain from meat, though, as I can testify, they offer to the weary, grateful traveler other viands, which cause him to forget the want of that particular article. The rooms set apart for the use of strangers are very commodious. As compared with eastern houses, generally, our reception here reminded us of a hotel in Europe or America. The chapel has altogether a modern air. The altar is erected over a natural grotto, said to have been one of the abodes of Elijah, and held, therefore, to be specially sacred. The good brother who had me in charge set forth its claims to veneration with much pathos, but made no objection to procuring a hammer, and helping me chip off a liberal piece of the hard rock as a souvenir. This mount abounds in natural caverns; and hence, Amos (9, 3), when he speaks of the futile attempt of the wicked to escape

from coming retribution, says that "though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, Jehovah will search and take them out thence."

#### THE VIEW FROM CARMEL.

The best position for viewing the prospect from Carmel is that furnished from the flat roof of the convent. Standing here, with my face toward the east, the attitude of the Hebrew in naming the points of the compass, I had behind me, of course, "the great wide sea," as the Psalmist calls it, which suggested to the sacred writers so many of their grandest images for setting forth an idea of God's power. Before me lay an extensive reach of the plain of Esdraelon, and the summits of Gilboa and the lesser Hermon. On the south-east was a mountainous tract, known as that of Ephraim or Samaria, filled up with a rolling sea of hill-tops to an indefinite extent. Looking to the south, along the coast, at the distance of ten miles, was Athlit, the site of a famous castle of the Crusaders, one of the last footholds which they relinquished to the Saracens. A few miles beyond there, though not in sight, were the ruins of Cæsarea, so interesting from its connection with the fortunes of the great apostle. The line of vision on the north was bounded by the hills near Nazareth and Safet. It would have been easy, so far as distance is concerned, to have seen ancient Tyre, now Sur; but the projection of Ras el-Abiad, the White Promontory, hid it from view. The graceful curve of the bay of Akka, sweeping from that city to the head of

Carmel, appeared here to great advantage. It was a glorious panorama, rich, too, in historical memories. I felt that greater distinctness of outline would have added to the effect. The objects, excepting a few near at hand, were distant, showed themselves in the mass, and left on the mind, therefore, a less definite impression.

#### FERTILITY OF CARMEL.

Carmel is often mentioned in the Bible as remarkable for its fertility, and the beauty of its vegetation. Thus Isaiah (35, 2) speaks of "the excellency of Carmel and Sharon," and Amos (1, 2), when he would give an idea of the extreme effects of a consuming drought, says "that even the top of Carmel (usually so verdant) shall wither." Though the region has long been neglected, and exhibits on the whole a sterile aspect, the soil when examined still gives evidence of being naturally very productive. "The Flora of Carmel," says Schubert,\* one of the most eminent of living naturalists, "is one of the richest and most diversified in all Palestine, since it unites the products of the mountain with those of the valley and the sea-coast." He enumerates forty-seven different kinds of flowers found there, without pretending to complete the list. "A botanist," he remarks, "might spend a year there, and every day be adding new specimens to his collection."

The plain between Haifa and the base of Carmel, though washed by the sea, is still cultivated and very fertile. One

\* Reise in das Morgenland, Vol. III., p. 212.

large tract was covered with wheat, the stalks of which could hardly support the heavy ears that weighed them down. There were orchards, in which I noticed olives, a few date-trees, fig-trees and pomegranates. The Indian fig, or prickly-pear, was abundant. Vegetables, especially cucumbers, were ripening under the eye of watchers, who occupied lodges on the margin of the gardens, to protect them against depredation.

#### THE RIDE TO AKKA.

Our ride to Akka was along the beach, with the surf breaking occasionally at the horse's feet. We forded again the mouth of the Kishon. It was sad to see here and there, as we rode on, the ribs of the hulks of vessels embedded in the sand; and so much the more, as it was a proof, not only of the violence of the storms which at certain seasons visit this coast, but of the imperfect skill in navigation of the eastern mariners. Just before coming to Akka, we crossed the Belus, now the Nahmen, as one of the natives pronounced it to me. It is deeper and broader at its mouth than the Kishon, and I was reluctant to enter it, till some of those who were passing had preceded me and shown it to be safe. It was on the banks of this stream that the Tyrian sailors are said to have made the accidental discovery of the art of manufacturing glass. It was near four o'clock when we left the gate of Haifa, and it wanted but little of seven as we entered that of Akka. The time is often given as more than three hours, but we galloped a part of the way, and the dis-

tance from Carmel to Akka cannot well be less than ten miles.

It gave a special interest to this ride to know that I was treading the ground over which Paul and his friends passed on his last journey to Jerusalem. Luke informs us in the Acts (21, 7, sq.), that the apostle on that occasion went by land from Ptolemais, or Akka, to Cæsarea; and the road which he followed must have been that which leads at present along the sea-shore, around the head of Carmel, and thence onward to the south.

Intending to remain at Akka until Monday, I took a room in the Latin convent. Some of the party preferred a bivouac under a noble, wide-spreading tree, in the court of this ancient asylum. I saw but little of the inmates. In the evening, happening to hear the sound of voices, I followed the direction of it, and thus found my way to the chapel, where a company of monks were chanting their vespers. The immense area which the convent occupies, the number of rooms in it, the solid style and general plan of the structure, though time has now made sad ravages in it, show that in its best days it could have boasted of no mean rank among establishments of this character.

#### A PUBLIC PARADE.

I spent most of the next day, which was Sabbath, in my room. The Latin convent, where I lodged, is not far from the southern gate, and in the course of the day I walked out to the sea-shore, in that direction. On the way, I encoun-

tered a procession of people, going, as I was told, to one of the mosques to perform the rite of circumcision. The principal person in the group was a boy, apparently about ten years old, mounted on a horse, elegantly caparisoned, and having a canopy held over him by a servant. Another boy, superbly dressed, somewhat younger, followed on a second horse, and, near the end of the train, came two others, whom I took to be of humbler rank, seated on a single horse. Musicians preceded them with drums, hautboys and tambourines. Of those in the procession, some carried streaming banners, some carried rolls of costly raiment, and others various other articles of a showy description, suited to add to the pomp of the occasion. A motley crowd of men, women and children, followed as spectators. The boys on the horses were eating sweetmeats as they rode along; the whole being a contrivance to divert their minds and prepare them for the painful rite they were to undergo. Such a parade, it is said, usually takes place when a boy is about to be circumcised, if the parents can afford the expense. If they are in indigent circumstances, they often take advantage of the circumcision of a rich man's son, by seeking to be allowed to join the procession, and repair to the mosque at the same time. The ceremony is not always so public; it may be performed in the dwelling of the parties, though even then the parade is seldom omitted.

This walk gave me a new idea of the value of stone houses in the East, as a protection against the heat. Within the walls of the convent, which was built of stone, it was as cool

as could be desired ; though it was nearly noon when I went abroad, I had perceived no intimation that the heat was uncommonly severe. But, on issuing into the open air, the change of temperature was extreme ; the heat produced a feeling like that of suffocation. I walked out of the gate along the beach as far as the mouth of the Belus ; but even then, though favored with a slight breeze from the Mediterranean, the heat was still intense, and, after a brief trial, I was glad to escape to my comfortable retreat within the convent.

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But my limits require me to put an end to these sketches, though the conclusion must be somewhat abrupt. Out of the many places that might be spoken of, I have selected a few which have some special prominence in the Bible, and deserve, therefore, to be made as familiar as possible to the mind of every reader. Would that what I have written might serve, in some measure, to furnish that knowledge, to render the study of the Scriptures more interesting and profitable to those who engage in it ! How much would such a result augment the pleasure, already so great in so many ways, connected with my recollections of this delightful journey !

# INDEX.

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## A.

Absalom's pillar, 103.  
 Absalom's tomb, 257.  
 Aceldama, 267.  
 Adullam, traditional cave of, 21.  
 Adventure at El-Bireh, 107.  
 Africa, search there for the lost tribes, 230.  
 Akka, seen from Nazareth, 305.  
 Alternations of heat and cold, 136.  
 American missionaries' cemetery, 286.  
 Anathoth, its situation, 75, 125.  
 Ancient stones, 287.  
 Animals used in the desert, 29.  
 Antonia, castle of, 281.  
 Aqueduct from Bethlehem, 269.  
 Aphek, not yet discovered, 181.  
 Arabs, their cunning, 201.  
 Assembly on the day of Pentecost, 220.  
 Ashdod, 134.  
 Assyrian conquest, 76, 77.  
 Athlit, site of a castle, 325.  
 Atmosphere, peculiar, 39; 198.  
 Azotus, 134.

## B.

Babylon, its fall announced, 50.  
 Bahurim, its situation, 92.  
 Barley harvest, 297.  
 Baths near Tiberias, 315.  
 Baskets, used as vehicles, 96.

Beatitudes, reputed mount of, 313.  
 Bed used among the common people, 105.  
 Bedouin encampment, 39.  
 Beeroth, 108.  
 Bees in Palestine, 96.  
 Behind the mill, 81.  
 Bells, their use, 77.  
     " Scripture allusion to them, 77.  
 Belus, river of, crossed, 327.  
 Bethany, 252, 273.  
 Bethel, account of, 173.  
     " night spent there, 175, 211.  
 Beth-Haccerem, 274.  
 Beth-Horon, 275.  
 Bethlehem, visit to, 294.  
     " surrounding country, 296.  
     " as seen from Mount Elyas, 296.  
 Bethshean, identified, 182.  
 Bezetha, 79, 279.  
 Bible lost in Jacob's well, 203.  
 Birds around the sanctuary, 87.  
 Birket el-Humman, 283.  
 Birket Israil, 282.  
 Blasted ears of corn, 135.  
 Bottles, leathern, size of, 45.  
     " old, insecurity of, 45.  
     " of skin, how made, 44.  
     " " " extensively used at present, 44.  
 "Breaking through," explained, 95.  
 Brother, use of the term in Scripture, 118.

Brooks in the east, 17.  
Buildings of the temple, as seen from Olivet, 272.  
Burial, present mode in the east, 100.  
Burning of costly gifts, 235.  
Business, different branches not intermixed, 61.

## C.

Cairo, appearance of its streets, 61.  
Camel's hair for garments, 96.  
Cana, two places of that name, 313.  
Capernaum, descent to, 208.  
" site not known, 321.  
Caravans, route from Damascus to Egypt, 210.  
Care of the Jews in copying the Scriptures, 226.  
Carmel, visible from Tabor, 310.  
" ascent of, 323.  
" view from, 325.  
Carmelites, 327.  
Carob-tree and its fruit, 129.  
Carriages unknown in Palestine, 19.  
Catherwood, Mr., entered the Mosque, 278.  
Cave of Jerome, 300.  
" of St. James, 259.  
Caves used for sepulchres, 97.  
" on Mount Carmel, 324.  
Chaff, how separated from the wheat, 161.  
Changes of time, in and around Jerusalem, 250.  
Children, mode of carrying them, 57.  
" " " " " as explaining Is. 49, 22, 57.  
Christians enter some of the mosques, 67.  
" excluded from the mosque of Omar, 278.  
Church of the Nativity, 299.  
Cisterns of private houses, 93.  
" of modern Jerusalem, 93.  
" on the north of Jerusalem, 270.  
City set on a hill, 70.  
Clapping of the hands, 234.  
Climate in the valley of the Jordan, 147.  
Coal used for fuel, 138.  
Cold, severe at night, 136, 138.

Coming of Elias, 235.  
Conduct of persons on the death of a friend, 113.  
Continual dropping, 84.  
Convent on Mount Sinai, 69.  
" of Mar Saba, 104.  
Copying of the Scriptures, 225.  
Corner of a bed, meaning in Amos 4, 12, 60.  
Counting the cost, 165.  
Criminals, one mode of putting them to death, 81.  
Cursing one's ancestors, 105.  
Customs of ancient times preserved, 53.

## D.

Daberath, probable situation, 74.  
Damascus, appearance from a distance and near by, 94.  
Damascus, houses in the walls, 68.  
Dan, the tribe compared to a serpent, 43.  
David's elegy, 179.  
" flight from Absalom, 272.  
" tomb, 235.  
Dead Sea, as seen from Olivet, 273.  
Death shade, meaning of, 47.  
Deceitful brook, 18.  
Deficiencies of Palestine unduly insisted on, 142.  
Demoniacs among the tombs, 101.  
Desert, its sparkling appearance, 23.  
" between the Nile and Palestine, 25, 40, 48.  
Deserts, often used as pastures, 26.  
" not mere tracts of sand, 26.  
Deserted village in Egypt, 94.  
Digging through houses, 93.  
Disciples, why compared to a city, 70.  
Dishonest gains, 136.  
Dishonesty of removing the landmark, 167.  
Divan, meaning and description of, 58.  
" capacity of, 61.  
" how indicative of rank, 59.  
Diversions at a Jewish festival, 234.  
Domes on the roofs of houses, 276.  
Dothan, still existing, 199.

Dreariness, a striking image of, 162.  
 Dress and food of the lower classes, 96.  
 Dry cisterns, 93.  
 Dwelling on the house-top, 74.

## E.

Early hours, 115.  
 " frequently referred to in the Bible, 117.  
 Eastern mode of resenting an affront, 106.  
 Edwards, Prof. B. B., tribute to his memory, 149.  
 Engedi, wilderness of, 300.  
 Egypt, its name in the old Testament, 120.  
 " anciently more productive than now, 28.  
 " and Palestine, shortest road between them, 50.  
 Egyptians, their mode of punishing parricides, 128.  
 El-Arish, the Botany Bay of the Pharaohs, 25.  
 " an incident there, 105.  
 El-Bireh, 15.  
 Elijah's pillar, 235.  
 Encampment of pilgrims, 23.  
 Endor, 182, 310.  
 En-Gannim, 178.  
 En-Rogel, 90, 264.  
 Esdraelon, its agricultural capabilities, 142.  
 " its extent, 178.  
 Eshcol, its locality, 164.  
 " for what distinguished, 164.  
 Explanation of Solomon's Song, 1, 5, 39.  
 Extent of ancient Jerusalem, 248.

## F.

Family tombs, 97.  
 Fan, an emblem of Christ's doctrine, 162.  
 Fanaticism of the Mohammedans, 323.  
 Females, their dress, 107.  
 " engaged in washing, 108.  
 " entrusted with the care of flocks, 106.  
 Fertility of Palestine, 140.

Fig-tree, peculiarity of its blossom, 133.  
 Fire needed at night, 138.  
 Fire of the temple during the captivity 264.  
 First night, in the desert, 31.  
 First view of Jerusalem, 242.  
 Fiske, Prof. N. W., place of his burial on Mount Zion, 286.  
 " " " " tribute to his memory, 286.  
 Flies, numerous near Akka, 241.  
 Flora of Carmel, 326.  
 Flowing with milk and honey, phrase explained, 141.  
 Food of the poorer classes, 129.  
 Footsteps of the patriarchs, 50.  
 Former reservoirs, 263.  
 Fountain of the Virgin, near Jerusalem, 260.  
 " near Nazareth, 92.  
 Frailty, emblem of, 125.  
 Frank Mountain, 274.  
 Fuel used in Palestine, 127, 131, 138.  
 Funeral rites, 110.  
 " procession on Mt. Zion, 112.

## G.

Gadara, 101.  
 Galilean caravans, route of, 15.  
 Gates of Jerusalem, 248.  
 Gathering out the stones, 165.  
 Gehenna, 265.  
 Gennesaret, plain of, 320.  
 Gerizim, a holy mount, 67, 198.  
 Gethsemane, 254.  
 Gibbon's disparagement of Palestine, 141.  
 Gibeah, now Jeba, 199.  
 " the home of Saul, 208.  
 Gibeon, 276.  
 Gibeonites, artifice of, 45.  
 Gideon's mode of punishment, 128.  
 Gihon, lower, 160, 168.  
 " upper, 90, 269.  
 " valley of, 246.  
 Gilboa, mountains of, 178.  
 God's care in clothing the grass of the field, 131.

Gorge through anti-Lebanon, 99.  
 Goshen, situation, 27.  
     " its value to the Hebrews, 23.  
 Government of Palestine, 144.  
 Grain-fields, how divided, 167.  
 Grapes, process of treading them, 157.  
 Grass of the oven, 131.  
 Grass on the house-tops, 125.  
 Gratification of traveling through the  
     lands of the Bible, 124.  
 Greek customs, often like the oriental,  
     161.  
     " priest, an odd one, 306.  
 Grinding at the mill, 77.  
     " illustrates the Saviour's predic-  
     tion, 78.  
 Guests, where and how received in an  
     oriental house, 59, 60.

## H.

Habakkuk's language in respect to the  
     fig-tree, 134.  
 Haifa, town of, 323.  
 Hai, its situation, 176.  
 Harvest, time of, 55.  
 Hauran, the ancient Gilead, 309.  
 Heat, its sudden increase, 137.  
 Hebleh, description of a wine-press there,  
     157.  
 Hebrew manuscripts, 225.  
 Hebrew term for sparrow, 87.  
 Hedge of thorns, 166.  
 Helbon, recently discovered, 214.  
 Hermits on Tabor, 306.  
 Hermon, its brilliant appearance, 311.  
 Herod's gate, 271.  
 Herod the Great's place of burial, 264.  
 Hezekiah's pool, 283.  
 Hiding the spies, 72.  
 Hill of Evil Council, 265.  
 Hills of Galilee, 233.  
     " within Jerusalem, 246.  
 Hinnom, valley of, 98, 246, 264.  
 Hippic tower, 284.  
 Holy cities of Palestine, 227.  
     " sepulchre, 239.

Holy Sepulchre, genuineness questioned,  
     290.  
     " " favored by tradition, 291.  
     " " why not the true site,  
     292.  
 Honey, its abundance, 142.  
     " from trees, 96.  
 Hospitality in the East, 64.  
     " how violated, Luke 9, 51, sq.,  
     65.  
 Hour of setting off on journeys, 117.  
 Houses of Egypt, &c., of what material  
     made, 94.  
     " Palestine, &c., 94.  
     " on the city walls, 67.  
 Husks, meaning of the term, 128.

## I.

Identification of places in Jerusalem, 249.  
 Idolaters at Bethel, 98.  
 Imagery drawn from the treading of  
     grapes, 158.  
 Indignation of James and John, 65.  
 Infidelity rebuked, 215.  
 Interest attaching to Jerusalem, 244.  
 Invasions of Palestine, 209.  
 Isaiah's language in chap. 22, 16, 97.  
     " parable of the vineyard, 165.  
     " his poetry, 191.  
 Island in the Dead Sea, 295.

## J.

Jacob's burial at Hebron, 111.  
     " claim on the gratitude of Laban,  
     136.  
 Jacob Berisch David, 229.  
 Jairus, scene in his house, 114.  
 Jenin, 178.  
 Jehoshaphat, valley of, 246, 254.  
 Jeremiah, place of his death, 49.  
     " his cave, 271.  
     " prediction concerning Ana-  
     thoth, 75.  
     " reference to public mourners.  
     111.

- Jericho, the road thither, 51, 206.  
 " lower than Jerusalem, 215.  
 Jerusalem, its rank among earthly sights, 242.  
 " its situation, 245.  
 " ancient and modern contrasted, 279.  
 " as seen from the north-west, 243.  
 " view of by night, 139.  
 " its streets parcelled out, 62.  
 " tombs in its vicinity, 99.  
 Jesus left at Jerusalem, 11.  
 Jews, their restoration to Palestine, 303.  
 Jews' quarter in Jerusalem, 221.  
 Jewish cemeteries, 259.  
 " festival, 231.  
 " houses, interior of, 59.  
 " pilgrims, their employment, character, &c., 219.  
 " population of Jerusalem at present, 218.  
 " race, present compared with the ancient, 52.  
 " scribe, 225.  
 " worship, 223.  
 Jezreel and its fountain, 181, sq.  
 Job's description of a thief, 95.  
 " illustration of the frailty of life, 95.  
 John's description of the heavenly Jerusalem, 82.  
 John the Baptist's dress and food, 95.  
 Jordan, as seen from Olivet, 273.  
 " cataracts in, 175.  
 Joseph's sepulchre, 98, 100.  
 " his sarcophagus, 197.  
 Josiah's zeal for the worship of Jehovah, 98.  
 Journey, how long the first day, 12.  
 " of Joseph's brethren into Egypt, 29.  
 Judas' native city, 21.  
 " death, 266.
- K.
- Kedar, tents of, 38.  
 Kedron, 253, 264.  
 Kedron, valley of, 246.  
 King of Ai, his sepulchre, 104.  
 King's garden, 263.  
 Kings, place of their burial, 285.  
 Kishon, river of, 321.  
 " allusion to, 322.  
 " prophets of Baal slain there, 323.
- L.
- Landmark between fields, 166.  
 Lake of Galilee, 318.  
 " storms upon, 319.  
 Latitude and longitude of Jerusalem, 248.  
 Latin language still spoken, 306.  
 Latter rain, 139, 303.  
 Lazarus' grave, 98.  
 Laws of prophetic language, 189.  
 Leather girdle, 96.  
 Lebonah, now El-Lebbun, 211.  
 Legacy of a mother to her daughter, 108.  
 Lepsius, anecdote of, 86.  
 Lesson from the flowers, 132.  
 Libertines, synagogue of, 222.  
 Limestone, abundant in Palestine, 143.  
 Locusts in Palestine, 97.  
 Lodge in a garden, 162.  
 Lost tribes, 230.  
 Lynch's voyage down the Jordan, 175.  
 " his testimony, 217.
- M.
- Magdala, its situation, 96, 320.  
 Mamre, Abraham's abode, 172.  
 Man bearing a pitcher of water, 89.  
 Maon, near Hebron, 211.  
 Mediterranean, seen from Mizpeh, 275.  
 " Tabor, 309.  
 " Carmel, 325.  
 Meiron, 231.  
 " its tombs, 232.  
 Merchants, itinerant, 62.  
 Meshallam, Mr., and his agricultural colony, 148.  
 Messiah, Jewish opinions respecting him, 227, 229.  
 Menzel, the stranger's house, 64.

- Michmah, now Mukhmas, 191.  
     " "pass" of, 192.  
 Mill-stones, description of them, 77.  
     " as an instrument of punishment, 81.  
     " explanation of Ex. 11, 5, 81.  
 Minstrels employed at funerals, 115.  
 Missionary assaulted, 302.  
 Mizpeh, situation of, 82.  
     " view from it, 275.  
 Moab, announcement of its fall by Isaiah, 159.  
 Modern Jerusalem, 279.  
 Mohammedan burying-ground at Alexandria, 110.  
     " at Kahn Yunus, 11.  
     " at Jerusalem, 253, 271.  
 Moon hanging over Tiberias, 307.  
 Moriah, 281.  
 Moses' statute in regard to the mill-stone, 80.  
 Mosque of Omar, 277.  
 Mount Casius, 49.  
     " of Offence, 261.  
     " of Olives, 251.  
     " " " its height, 272.  
     " " " its tombs, 97, 99.  
     " Zion, partly out of the city, 285.  
 Mountain, how made to flow with oil and wine, 144.  
 Mouths of sepulchres gaping upon travelers, 88.  
 Mukhna, plain of, 193.  
 Muezzin, his office, 178.  
 Mungo Park in an African desert, 132.  
 Mustard-seed plant, its height and size, 123.  
     " " not generic, 124.  
 Mysterious cry, 113.
- N.
- Nablus, 193.  
 Nain, burial of the widow's son, 112.  
 Names of ancient times retained, 83, 209.  
     " mode of identifying them, 211.  
     " ancient and modern compared, 212.
- Narrow paths, 169,  
 Natural advantages of Palestine, 146.  
 Nazareth, tomb at, 100.  
     " how it appears, 301.  
     " its population, &c., 302.  
 Nebuchadnezzar's feast, 71.  
 Neby Samuil, 275.  
 Nehemiah's well, 264.  
 Nile, spoken of as a sea, 119.  
 Night of the betrayal, 139.  
 Nineveh, discovery there, 187.  
 No or Thebes, as described by Nahum, 119.  
 Nob, on Olivet, 192.  
 North side of Jerusalem, 270.  
 Numerous languages heard in Jerusalem, 220.
- O.
- Oasis, described, 20.  
 Oaks of Moreh, 193.  
     " peculiar, 305.  
 Objection against the accuracy of Scripture, 134.  
     " urged against Gen. 42, 26, 29.  
     " against Jacob's well, 201.  
 Oleanders, 316, 321.  
 Olive-tree, kind of soil it prefers, 146.  
     " its age, 255.  
 Open bier, 112.  
 Ophel, 262.  
 Ornaments of Hebrew women, 107.  
 Ox-goad, 155.
- P.
- Palestine, present fertility, 144.  
     " in its palmy days, 149.  
 Parable of the good Samaritan, 206.  
 Partial representations of travelers, 143.  
 Passover, time of its occurrence, 138, 139.  
 Past and present brought near to each other, 84.  
 Pastoral resources of Palestine, 142, 146.  
 Path to Bethany, 252.  
 Paths through corn-fields, 168.  
 Paul rescued from the Jewish mob, 281.

Paul's escape from Damascus, 67.  
 Paul, his route from Akka to Cæsarea, 328.  
 Peter, praying on the house-top, 73.  
 Petra, description of the chasm there, 47.  
 " its tombs, 99.  
 Pharaoh's vision of the blasted ears of corn, 135.  
 Pharisees and whited sepulchres, 56.  
 Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, 224.  
 Pilate's Prætorium, 284.  
 Pilgrim psalms, 21.  
 Place for ripening and drying fruits, &c., 72.  
 " of honor on the divan, 60.  
 Plain of Jericho, its richness, 147.  
 Plough, its construction and use, 153.  
 Plucking the ears of corn, 163.  
 Pompeii, mill-stones there, 78.  
 Pool of Bethesda, 282.  
 " of Siloam, 262.  
 Posture in prayer, 109.  
 Potter's field, still furnishes clay, 267.  
 Precipice, one at Nazareth, 309.  
 Precipices about the Lake of Galilee, 118, 190.  
 Prickly pear used for a hedge, 166.  
 Priests, barefoot in the temple, 66.  
 Procession to a mosque, 328.  
 Prodigal son's food, 128.  
 Prospect from Safet, 229.  
 Proverb of the ox-goad, 156.  
 Purse and scrip, 97.  
 Pupils in the Rabbinic schools, 231.

R.

Rabbinic schools of Safet, 227, 229, 231.  
 Rachel's tomb, 100.  
 Rahab, situation of her house, 68.  
 " hiding the spies, 72.  
 Rain, its effect on the roofs of houses, 85.  
 Ramah, near Jerusalem, 191.  
 " in Naphtali, 240.  
 Ramleh, tank there, 90.  
 Ravines, numerous in Palestine, 47.

Reading aloud, 224.  
 Rebekah, drawing water, 89.  
 " returning from the well, 107.  
 Reconciliation of the accounts of the Saviour's posture in the garden, 109.  
 Religious ostentation of the Mohammedans, 74.  
 Rephaim, plain of, 268, 274.  
 Reservoir, the largest near Jerusalem, 268.  
 " near St. Stephen's gate, 253.  
 Ritter's testimony, 215.  
 " his illustration, 216.  
 Road to Anathoth and Bethel, 271.  
 Roads, danger of, 21.  
 Roller, used on the roofs of houses, 84.  
 Roman governor, his usual place of residence, 284, 285.  
 Roof, as place of observation, 75.  
 Roofs, used as a place of promenade, 70, 71, 72.  
 " sleeping-room, 71.  
 " store-room, 72.  
 " places of retirement, 73.  
 " " " prayer, 73.  
 Ruins at Bethel, 174.  
 " at Safet, 228.  
 " of a synagogue, 237.  
 " on Tabor, 308.  
 Rules for preparing copies of the Pentateuch, 226.  
 Ruth's language in respect to the field of Boaz, 167.  
 " gleanings in the fields, 297.

S.

Sabbath, spent at Nazareth, 300.  
 " " at Ptolemais, 228.  
 Safet, description of, 227.  
 " its position, 70.  
 " number of its Jewish inhabitants, 221.  
 " elegance of its synagogue, 223.  
 Salim, ancient Shalim, 194.  
 Salt deserts, 48.  
 Samson's punishment, 81.

- Samaria, or Sebastieh, 183.  
 " denounced by the prophet, 184.  
 " its origin, 187.  
 " present condition, 188.  
 Sand-hills of the desert, 40.  
 Saul's outburst of anger against Jonathan, 106.  
 " his fate, 181.  
 " his last battle-field, 183.  
 Saviour in the garden, 109,  
 " in the synagogue at Nazareth, 223.  
 " place of his trial and scourging, 284.  
 Saviour's agony in the garden, 256.  
 " comparison of the Inconstant disciple, 154.  
 " illustration of God's watchful care, 87.  
 " temptation, place of its occurrence, 273.  
 " trial, occurred early, 115.  
 Shechem, its beautiful situation, 193.  
 Scene, mournful, among the tombs, 265.  
 " from the patriarchal age, 88.  
 Sea, use of the term in Scripture, 118.  
 Seed by the way-side, 168.  
 Seleh, its situation and appearance, 58.  
 Septuagint, renders correctly Prov. 27, 15, 86.  
 Sepulchres of the Hebrews, 97.  
 " " " Valley of Hinnom, 98.  
 " " " Mount of Olives, &c., 99.  
 " " " wealthier families, 265.  
 Serbonian bog, 49.  
 Serpents of the desert, dangerous to travelers, 43.  
 Shadow of a rock, 50.  
 Shamgar's achievement, 155.  
 Sheep before her shearers, 258.  
 " gate, 282.  
 " and goats intermixed, 26.  
 Shepherds often at a distance from their homes, 26.  
 " plain of, near Bethlehem, 300.  
 Shunem, 180, 182.  
 Shunning the public ways, 169.  
 Shur, desert of, 40.  
 Shutting the gates, 82.  
 Sign of summer, 133.  
 Signs of fertility often misunderstood, 143.  
 Siloah's brook, 262.  
 Silwan, village of, 99, 261.  
 Single names among the Hebrews, 83.  
 Sketch of a Galilean Tempe, 239.  
 Sky, its appearance at night, 30.  
 Sleeping-room, sometimes on the roof, 71.  
 Sliding of the feet, 19.  
 Snow for cooling drinks, 63.  
 " as explaining Prov. 24, 13, 54.  
 Solitude, described by Jeremiah, 80.  
 Solomon's temple, its situation, 88.  
 Song of the grinders, 78.  
 Songs of modern pilgrims, 23.  
 Sources of information respecting the Jews, 218.  
 Sparrows, sale of, 86.  
 Sports of children in the east, 120.  
 Star of the Magians, 298.  
 Stephen, traditional place of his martyrdom, 253.  
 Stone at the mouth of a sepulchre, 100.  
 " heaps upon the graves of the infamous, 102.  
 " on the mouth of a well, 91.  
 Stone houses, their value, 329.  
 Stony soil not unproductive, 143.  
 Store-house on the roof, 72.  
 Storms of sand, 41.  
 Streets, how distinguished, 61.  
 Strength of ancient Jerusalem, 249.  
 Succoth, punishment of its princes, 127.  
 Superiority of Palestine to Egypt, 152.  
 Synagogues at Jerusalem, 221.
- T**
- Tabor visited, 304,  
 " prospect from, 309.  
 Taking off the shoes, 66.  
 Taking up the bed, 105.  
 Tares, in the parable, 130.  
 Tekoa, a place of herdsmen, 300.

- Temple, its site, 280.  
     " prediction of its overthrow, 288.  
 Tent, a type of the body, 38.  
     " of Kedar, 38.  
 Tents, as originating many Scripture expressions, 35, 37.  
     " frequent removals of, 36.  
     " antiquity and extent of their use, 33.  
     " manner of pitching, 34.  
 Testimony of travelers to the fertility of Palestine, 146.  
 Thorns, their prevalence in Palestine, 126.  
     " " use, 127.  
     " how employed in figurative language, 127.  
     " immense height near Succoth, 128.  
 Threshing-floors, 160.  
     " machine, 161.  
 Time of year for traveling in the east, 122.  
 Tittle, meaning of the word, 225.  
 Titus' camp, its position, 270.  
     " confession in regard to the capture of Jerusalem, 249.  
 Toilet of Hebrew women, 107.  
     " description of by Isaiah, 107.  
 Tomb of Rabbi Hillel, 232.  
     " " the Virgin, 254.  
 Tombs, as places of shelter, 100.  
     " in the valley of Jehoshaphat, 258.  
     " of the kings, 270.  
 Tower of David, 284.  
     " of Siloam, 261.  
 Traditions at Meiron, 234.  
     " of localities, their value, 249.  
 Traitor's approach to Gethsemane from the city, 257.  
 Transfiguration, not on Tabor, 303.  
     " perhaps near Hermon, 409.  
 Traveling in the east, rate of, 11.  
 Treading of grapes, 156.  
     " " " an emblem of slaughter, 159.  
 Treatment of the infamous dead, 102.  
 Troughs for watering cattle, 91.  
 Turning the face to the wall, 60.  
     " of the rivers of water, 151.  
 Turkish rule unfriendly to industry, 144.  
 Tyropœon, between Zion and Moriah, 62, 288.  
     " remains of the bridge there, 289.  
  
 U.  
  
 Upper room, its traditional locality, 286.  
 Urtas, valley of, 147.  
  
 V.  
  
 Veneration of the Jews for holy spots, 102.  
 View from Hebron,<sup>1</sup>  
     " from an eminence near Akka, 240.  
     " " St. Stephen's gate, 251.  
     " " the top of Olivet, 272.  
     " " Neby Ismail, 304.  
 Vine, less cultivated than anciently, 156.  
 Vineyards, where planted anciently, 144.  
 Vintage-shout, 159.  
 Vipers in the desert, 43.  
 Voltaire's sarcasm, 141.  
  
 W.  
  
 Wady Aly, 46.  
 Walls of Jerusalem, 248.  
 Watch-towers, 163.  
 Water in the desert, 17, 29.  
     " how collected around Jerusalem, 269.  
     " its scarcity in Arabia, 19.  
     " mode of drawing, 90.  
     " usually drawn by females, 89.  
 Watering machine, 153.  
     " of flocks, 91.  
     " with the foot, 151.  
     " as illustrating Deut. 11, 10, 152.  
 Water-shed between Mediterranean and Jordan, 192.

Watts' lines on the betrayal, 139.

Welees, description of, 55.

“ ancient names retained, 57.

Well, in a court, 92.

“ Jacob's identified, 199, 202.

“ depth measured, 203.

West side of Jerusalem, 268.

Whited sepulchres, 55.

Wild honey, 96.

Wilderness, meaning of the term, 27.

“ terrors of, 41.

Windows, how made, 76.

Wine-press, description of, 157.

Winnowing shovel, 161.

Women as mourners, 110.

“ their place in the synagogue, 222.

Wood, its scarcity, 131.

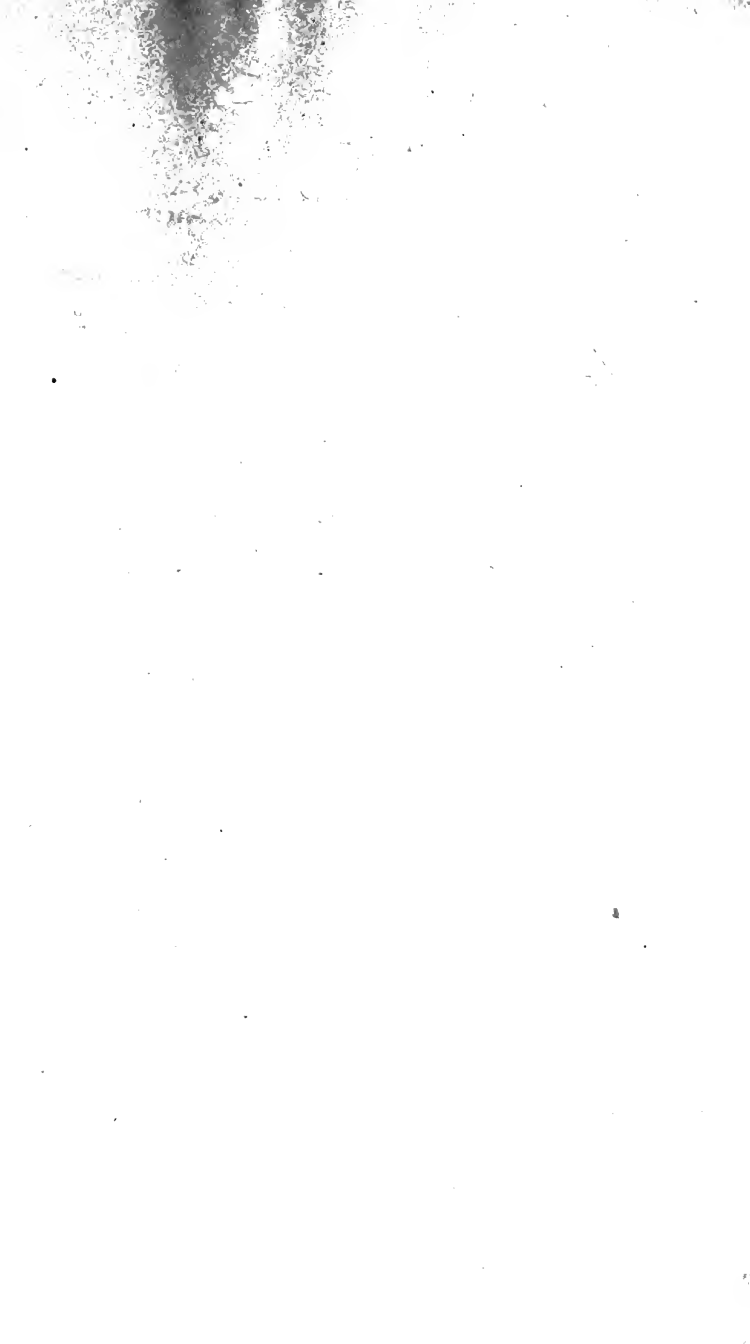
Z.

Zacharias' tomb, 259.

Zion ploughed as a field, 267.

Ziph, desert of, 208.









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